7
SUZUKA
KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
David Ury

LETTERED BY
North Market Street Graphics

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Suzuka 7

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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A Note from the Author

BY THE TIME THIS COMIC COMES OUT, THE SUZUKA ANIME WILL BE ON TV. MY OWN MANGA WILL BE MADE INTO A REAL-LIFE ANIME. IT'S LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE! I'M GOING TO HAVE TO STAY UP LATE SO I CAN WATCH IT.

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute,* it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

SUZUKA
7
Kouji Seo

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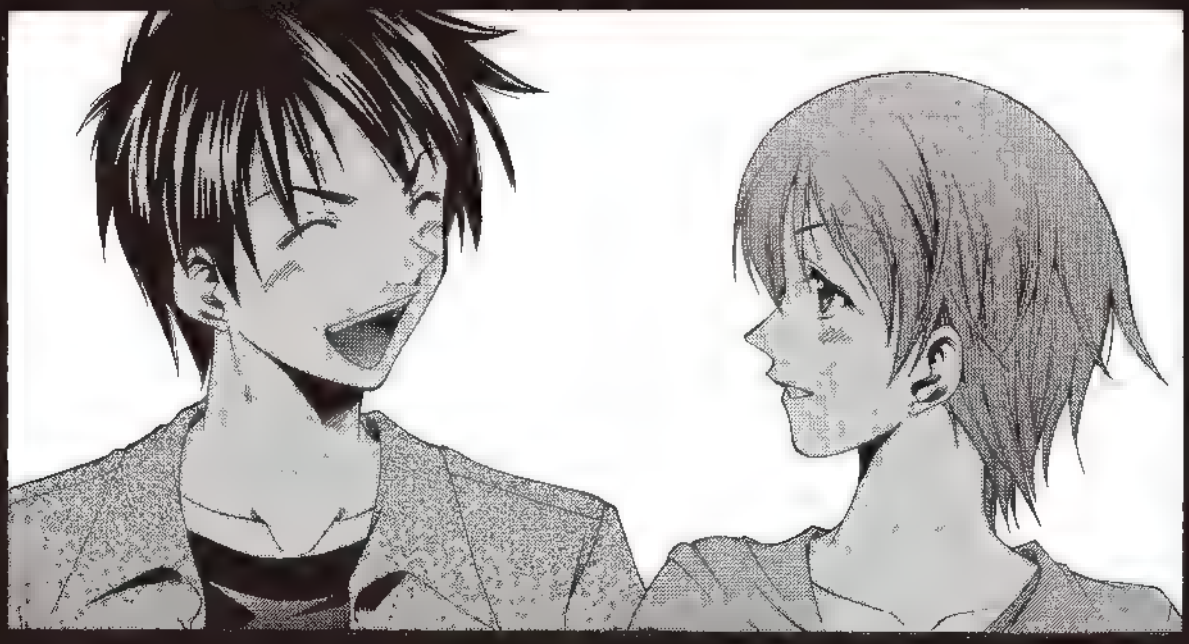


SUZUKA

#50 THE GIFT

AAWW-WWW, GOOD MORN-NG.
FIX ME A CUP OF TEA, WILL YA, AYANO-SAN.

BY THE WAY, YAMATO-KUN.
HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT TO GET FOR HONOKA-CHAN?

JUST BECAUSE IT'S YOUR DAY OFF DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN SLEEP ALL DAY, YAMATO-KUN.
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOUR BREAKFAST ON THE TABLE FOREVER, YOU KNOW?
YEAH, YOU ARE SUCH A SLACKER, YAMATO-KUN.
YEAH, YEAH, SORRY.

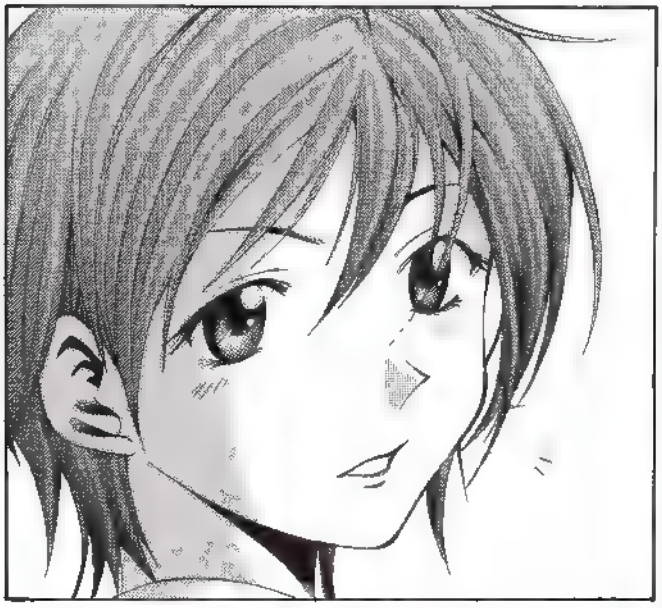
.....

REALLY? I DON'T KNOW IF I TRUST YOUR TASTE THOUGH.
YEAH, I GOT A REALLY CUTE NECKLACE FOR HER.

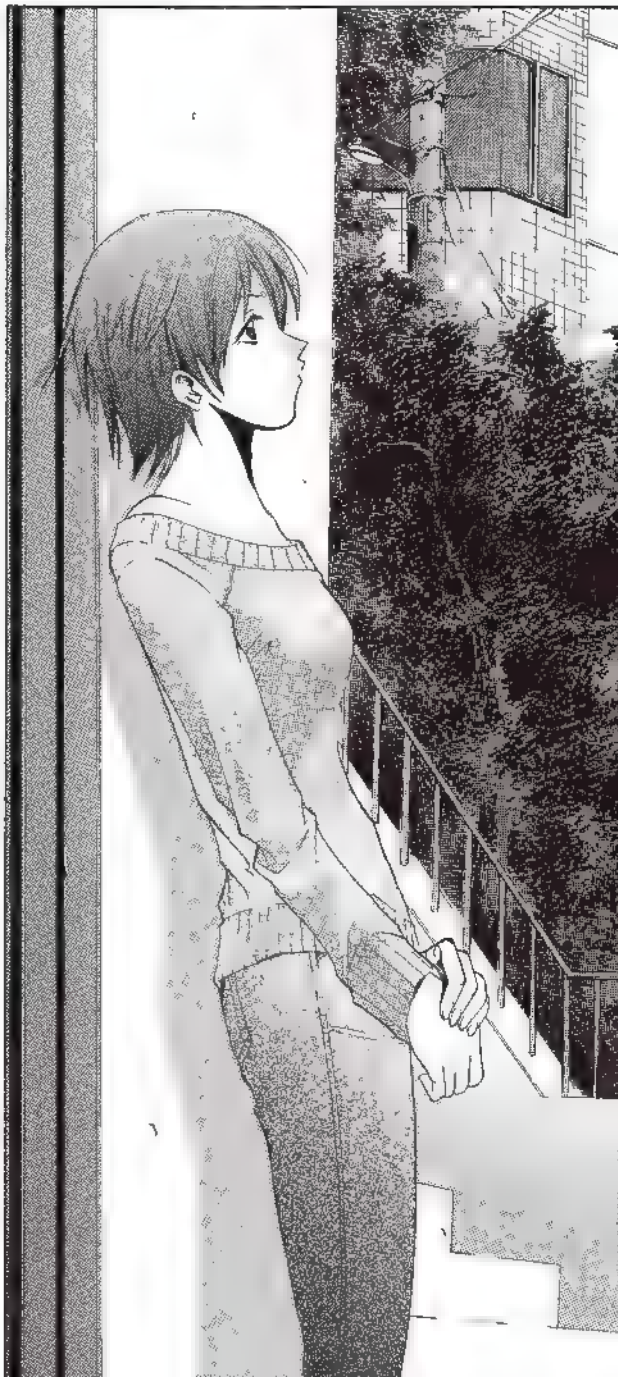
SHE'LL LOVE IT WON'T SHE, GORO-CHAN?
IT'S REALLY CUTE.
ゴロ
PURR
ゴロ
PURR
RIGHT?!
W-WELL, THANKS FOR BREAK-FAST.
DON'T YOU WANT SOME TEA, SUZUKA-CHAN?
NO, THANKS.
CLOPPA
CLOPPA
HEY, CAN I SEE THE NECKLACE YOU GOT HER?!
N-NO. IT'S ALL WRAPPED UP.
HOW LAME!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S LAME!
HEY, NO FIGHT ING, YOU TWO.

... HUH?

GUESS I'LL GO G VE IT TO HER.
SLIDE



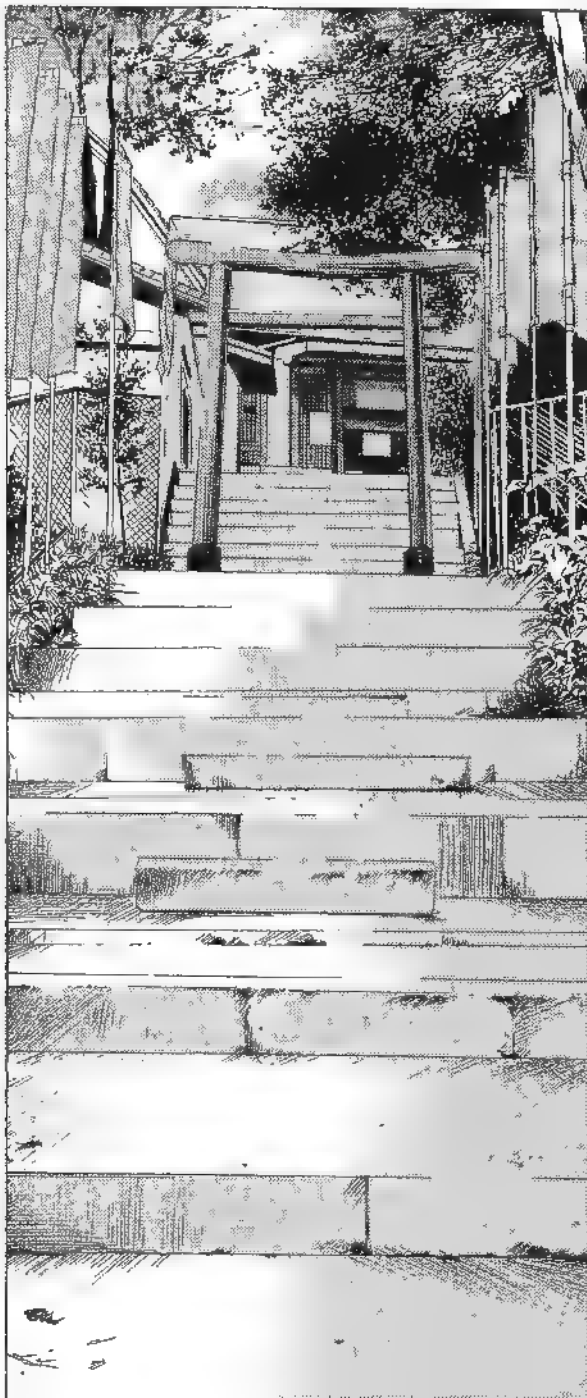
W-WELL, UM ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, ASAHINA? I THOUGHT YOU WENT BACK TO YOUR ROOM.



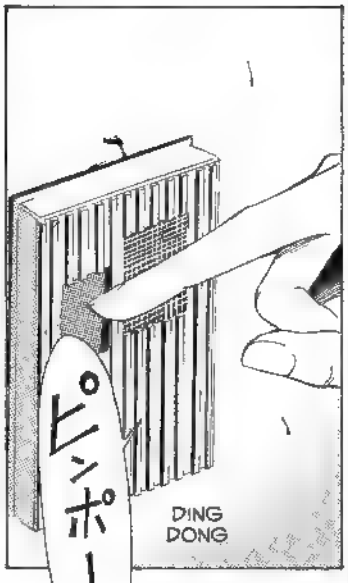
UH... UM,
JUST DON'T SAY ANYTHING STU-PID TO HONOKA-CHAN, ALL RIGHT?
YOU ALWAYS SAY THE WRONG THING AND RUIN EVERY-THING!
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T SAY ANY-THING.
YEAH...? I DON'T KNOW...I'M ST LL WORRIED.
HEY, DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS IS A GOOD GIFT FOR HER?
NOW I'M NOT SO SURE.
WHAT...?
Y-YEAH...
YOU'RE R GHT.
I'M GONNA GO GIVE IT TO HER RIGHT NOW!!
...OKAY.
.....
... YOU SHOULD TRUST YOUR-SELF.
YOU THOUGHT IT WAS CUTE, RIGHT?

SAKURAI

SHE'S GONNA LOVE IT!
IT'LL BE FINE.



YES.
CLOP
CLOP
H-HERE SHE COMES !!


ピンポーン
DING DONG

H-HI !!
HELLO !!
ガラ SLIDE
ガラ SLIDE
AKITSU KI-KUN.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE SO EARLY?
U-UM, WELL...
I JUST WANTED TO SAY..
H-HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

THANKS.
SO YOU DID KNOW IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY HUH, AKITSUKI-KUN?
Y-YEAH!!
ALL RIGHT, SHE LOOKS REALLY HAPPY!!!
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING, BECAUSE I WANTED IT TO BE A SURPRISE!
UH... ACTUALLY... AKITSUKI-KUN...
I HEARD ALL ABOUT IT FROM YUUKA-SAN LAST NIGHT.
SHE TOLD ME THAT YOU WENT OUT TO BUY A PRESENT FOR ME...
WHAT?!
I THINK IT JUST SLIPPED OUT...SHE SEEMED REALLY SORRY.
TCH...
THAT LITTLE BITCH. SHE TOTALLY DID IT ON PURPOSE!!

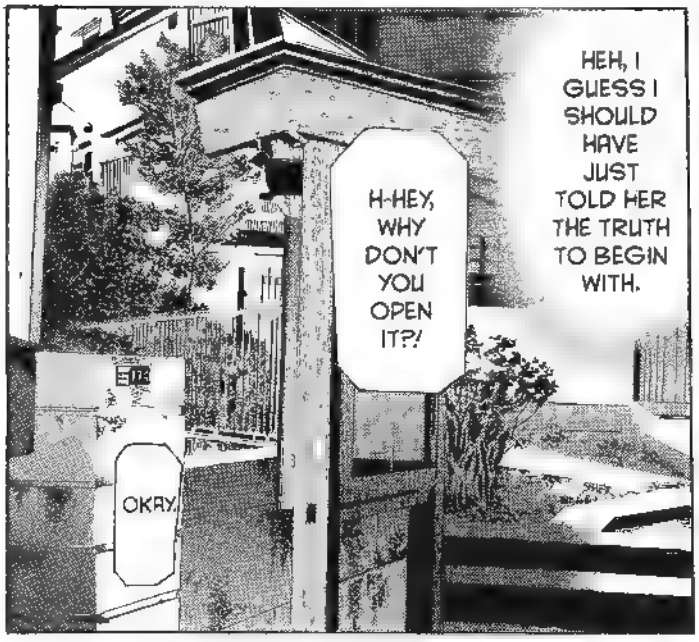
BUT I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN I HEARD HER SAY THAT.
THANK YOU SO MUCH, AKITSUKI-KUN...
W-WELL...
WAS GONNA TRY TO PRETEND THAT I WAS SURPRISED...
...LIKE YUUKA-SAN TOLD ME TO...
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO LIE TO YOU!
EVEN ABOUT THAT.
THEN I GUESS... IT'S ALL GOOD.
OH...
LIE TO ME...?

BUT I ACTUALLY WENT OUT WITH ASAHINA TO...
ACTUALLY, I'VE BEEN LYING...
YASU-NOBU!! I MADE PLANS TO HANG OUT WITH YASU-NOBU!!
YOU ALWAYS SAY THE WRONG THING AND RUIN EVERY-THING!
JUST DON'T SAY ANYTHING STUPID TO KONOKA-CHAN, ALL RIGHT?
W-WELL...
THE TRUTH IS THAT I DIDN'T ACTUALLY GO SHOPPING WITH YASUNOBU. I WENT...
...?
WHAT'S WRONG?

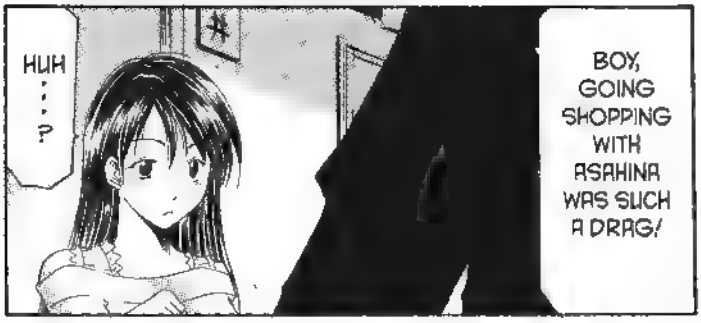
WITH ASAHINA-SAN...
RIGHT?
WHAT!?
Y-YOU KNEW!?
YEAH... I HAPPENED TO SEE YOU GUYS WHEN I WENT SHOPPING YESTERDAY
OH.. UH... BUT WE WEREN'T DOING ANYTHING WEIRD...
YEAH, I KNOW.

YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO PICK OUT SOMETHING REALLY SPECIAL FOR ME, RIGHT?
WHAT...

I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CHOOSE A GOOD PRESENT ON MY OWN, SO...
Y-YEAH!! EXACTLY.

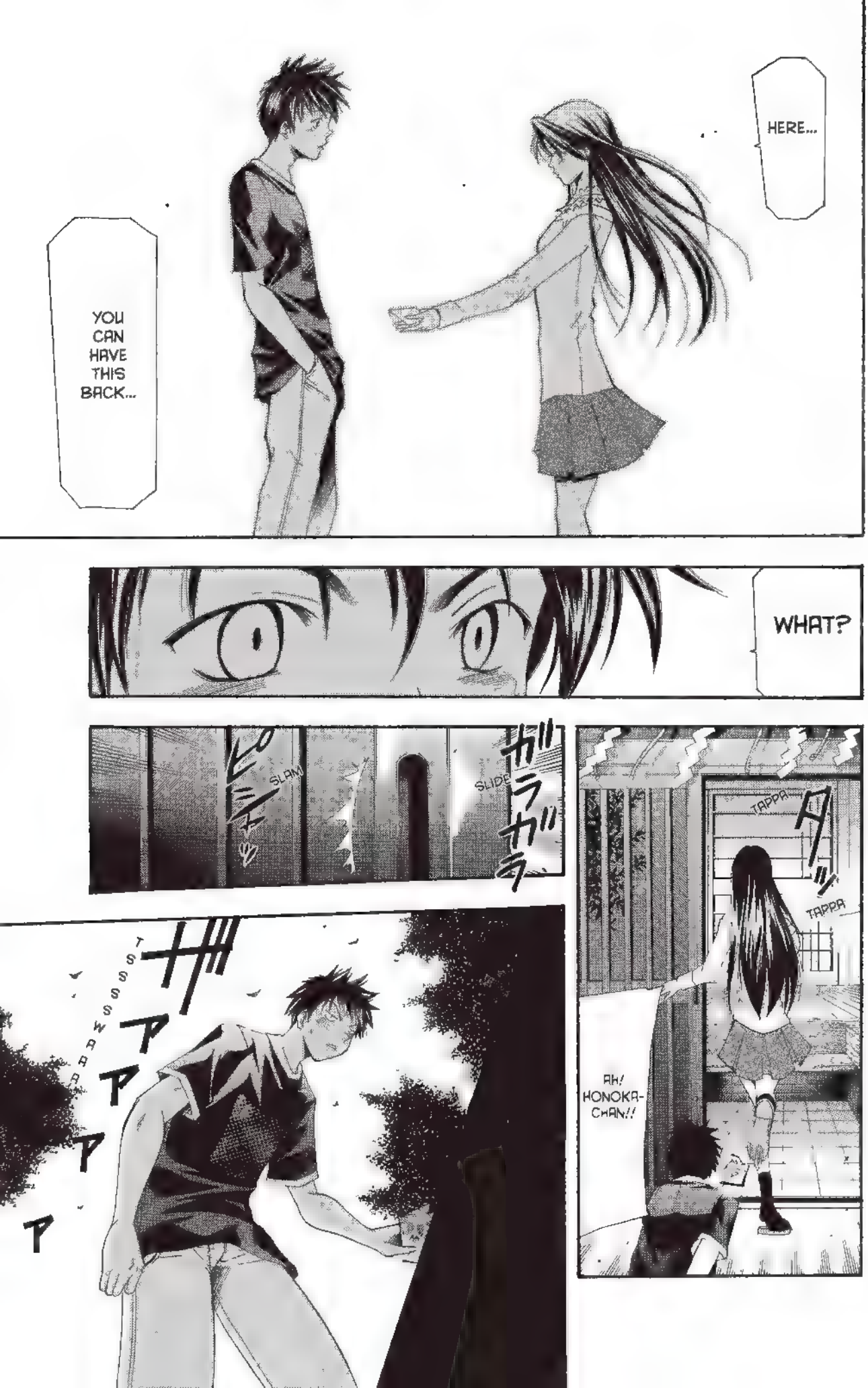

HEH, I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE JUST TOLD HER THE TRUTH TO BEGIN WITH.
H-HEY, WHY DON'T YOU OPEN IT?!
OKAY.

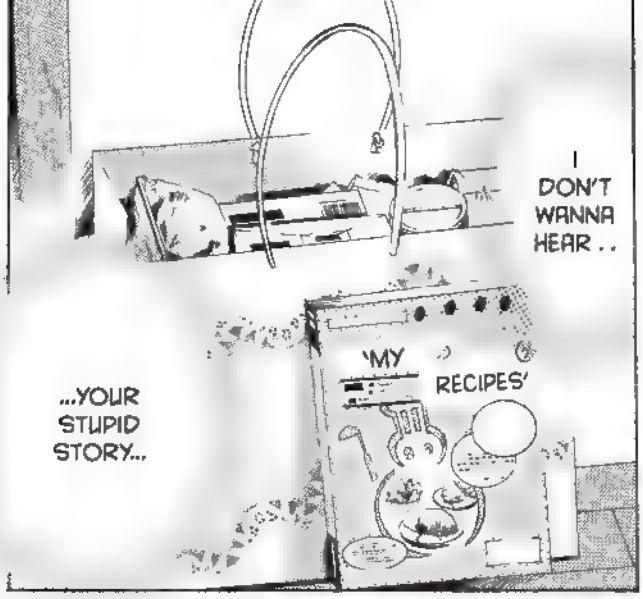
WELL THEN IT...
DOESN'T REALLY BOTHER ME.
O-OKAY!

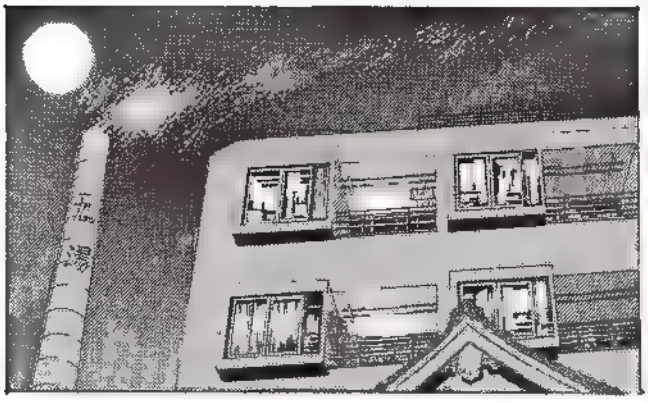

HUH....?
BOY, GOING SHOPPING WITH ASAHINA WAS SUCH A DRAG!

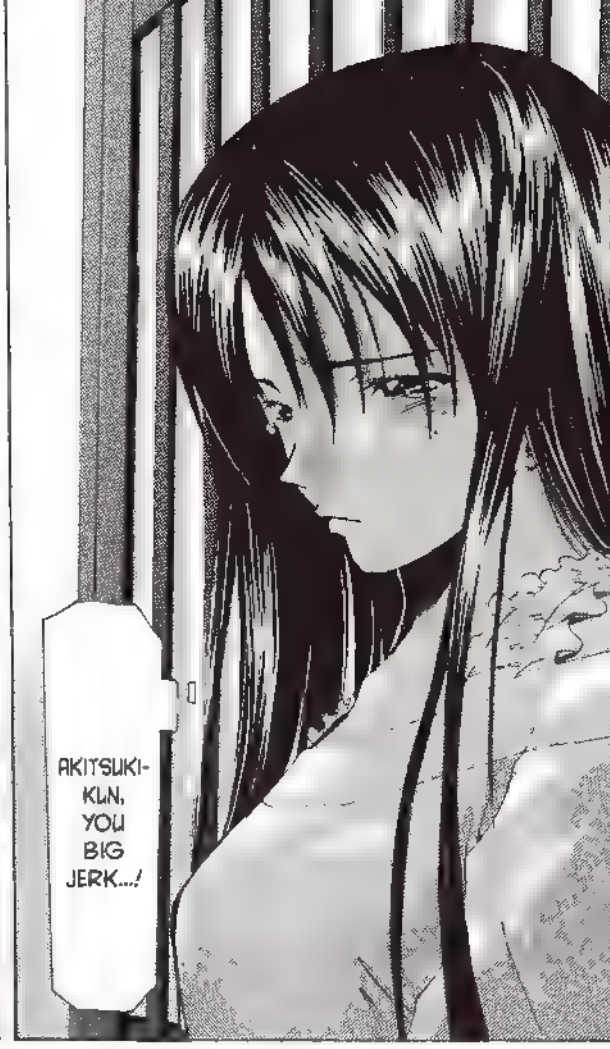
SHE TOOK ME AROUND EVERY-WHERE, SAYING "HOW ABOUT THIS ONE. HOW ABOUT THAT ONE."
WE WALKED ALL THE WAY TO SHIBUYA AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW IT WAS ALREADY GETTING DARK.
.....
OH... REALLY..
YEAH, AND I WAS SO HUNGRY AND TIRED.
AND ASAHINA GOT ALL GRUMPY...
AND AFTER ALL THAT, I FOUND THE BEST GIFT ALL ON MY OWN.
I SHOULD'VE JUST GONE BY MYSELF!
.....
WHY...
...DO YOU ALWAYS LOOK SO HAPPY WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT HER...?

HE NEVER LOOKS THAT HAPPY WHEN HE'S WITH ME.
WHAT ?
THAT ALWAYS HAPPENS WHEN I GO OUT SHOPPING WITH HER.
THAT'S ENOUGH ALREADY...
I DON'T...
W-WHAT? DID I SAY SOME-THING BAD ...?
I SAID THAT'S ENOUGH!
...WANNA HEAR ANY-MORE...

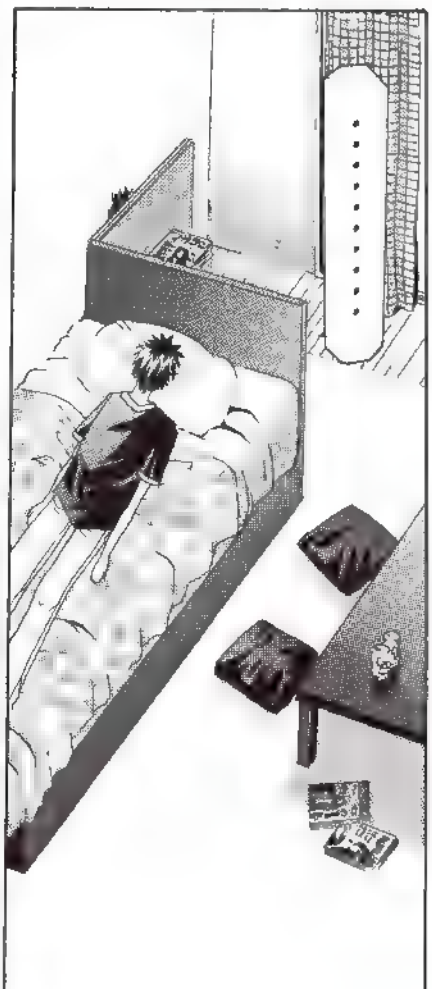

HERE...
YOU CAN HAVE THIS BACK...
WHAT?
SLAM
SLIDE
TAPPA
TAPPA
AH! HONOKA-CHAN!!


I DON'T WANNA HEAR..
'MY RECIPES'
...YOUR STUPID STORY...




AKITSUKI-KUN, YOU BIG JERK...!

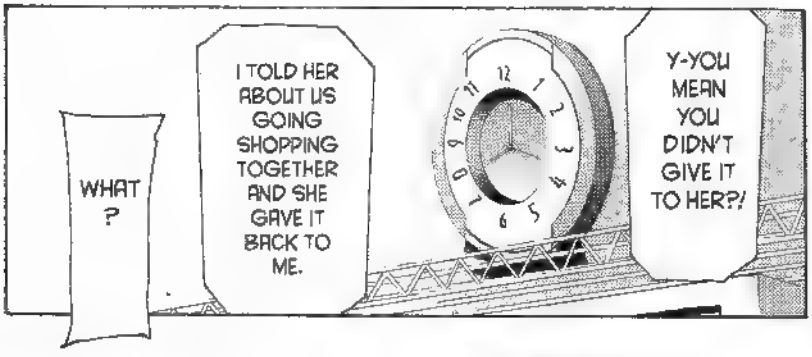
I DID IT AGAIN...
I AM SUCH AN ASS-HOLE...


.....

...HUH?
KNOCK
KNOCK

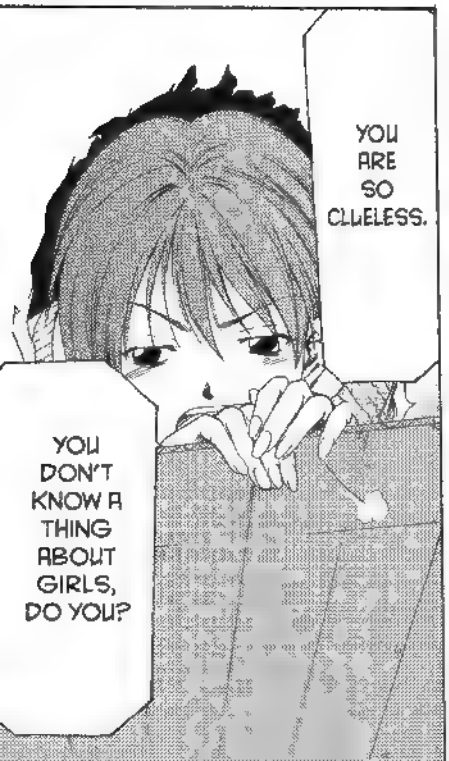
WHAT IS IT?
.....

I JUST WANTED TO KNOW IF HONOKA-CHAN LIKED IT OR NOT...
SO HOW DID IT GO?


WHAT ?
I TOLD HER ABOUT US GOING SHOPPING TOGETHER AND SHE GAVE IT BACK TO ME.
Y-YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T GIVE IT TO HER?!

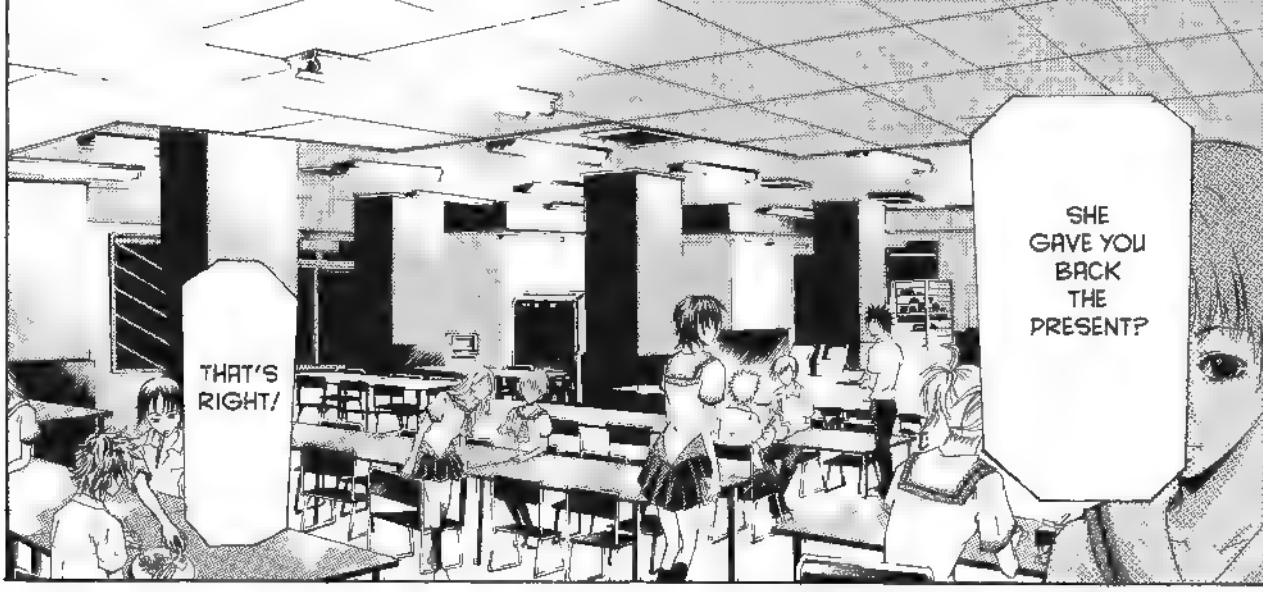
...HERE.
HUH...?

OH MY GOD...
SO WAS JUST TELLING HER ABOUT IT AND ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE GOT REALLY MAD...
WELL, SHE ALREADY KNEW THAT WE WENT SHOP-PING TOGETH-ER...

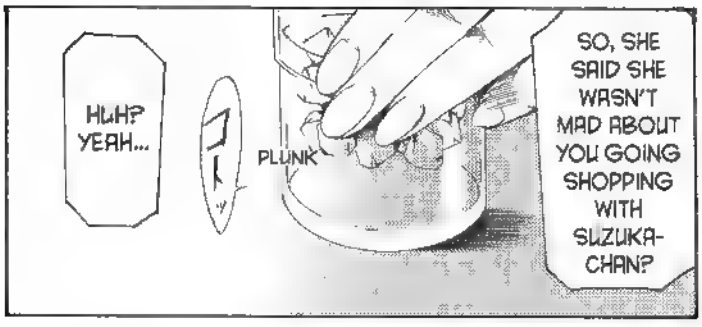

YOU ARE SO CLUELESS.
YOU DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT GIRLS, DO YOU?

I'M SORRY...
GUESS I MADE YOU SPEND ALL THAT TIME WITH ME FOR NOTHING...
.....
UM...
I-I DON'T MIND THAT, BUT...
PLUNK
THINK ABOUT WHAT I DID...?
SLAM
YOU BETTER THINK LONG AND HARD ABOUT WHAT YOU DID!!
AH...
WELL, OKAY, MAYBE I WAS BEING A LITTLE INSENSI-TIVE BUT...
DID SHE REALLY HAVE TO GET *THAT* MAD?

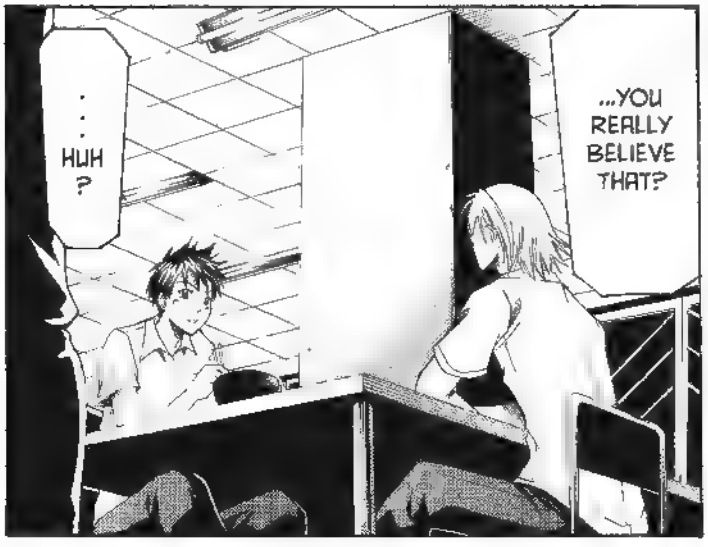
#51 IGNORED
SUZUKA


SHE GAVE YOU BACK THE PRESENT?
THAT'S RIGHT!

BUT WHEN I TOLD HER THE STORY ABOUT ASAHINA DRAGGING ME AROUND THE TOWN, SHE SUDDENLY GOT ALL PISSED.
SHE SAID SHE WASN'T MAD AT ME FOR GOING SHOPPING WITH ASAHINA.


HUH? YEAH...
コト…
PLUNK
SO, SHE SAID SHE WASN'T MAD ABOUT YOU GOING SHOPPING WITH SUZUKA-CHAN?

.....
WHAT DO YOU THINK?! IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE AT ALL.


...
HUH?
...YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?

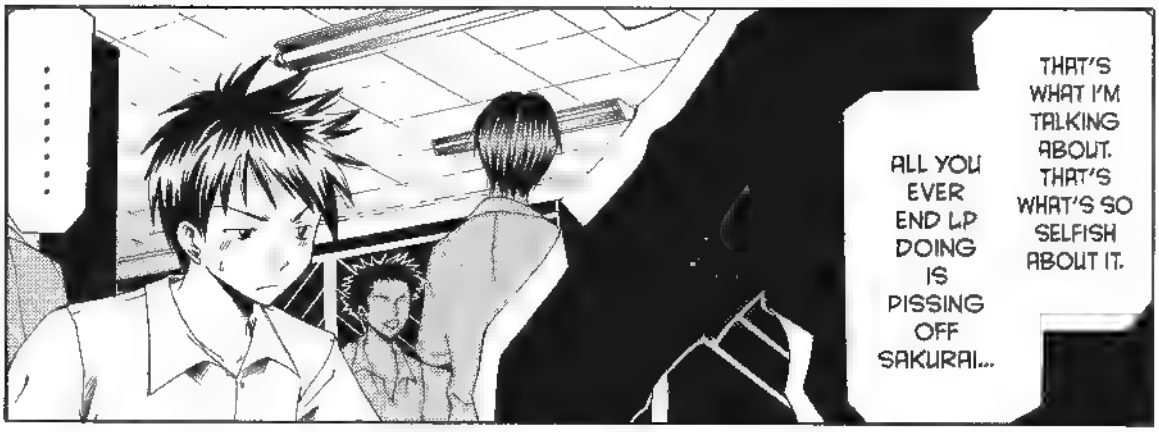
DON'T YOU GET IT? SHE WAS JUST ACTING LIKE SHE DIDN'T CARE.
BECAUSE SHE LIKES YOU.

W-WAIT A SECOND!! I NEVER EVEN WENT OUT WITH ASAHINA...
IT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT THAN IF YOU WENT OUT WITH HASHIBA OR YUUKA-SAN.
OF COURSE. DID YOU SERIOUSLY BELIEVE THAT ANY GIRL WOULD BE COOL WITH HER BOYFRIEND GOING OUT SHOPPING WITH HIS EX?

ACTING ...?

SO TO SAKURAI, YOU TWO MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN A COUPLE.
YEAH, BUT YOU WERE IN LOVE WITH HER UP UNTIL A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

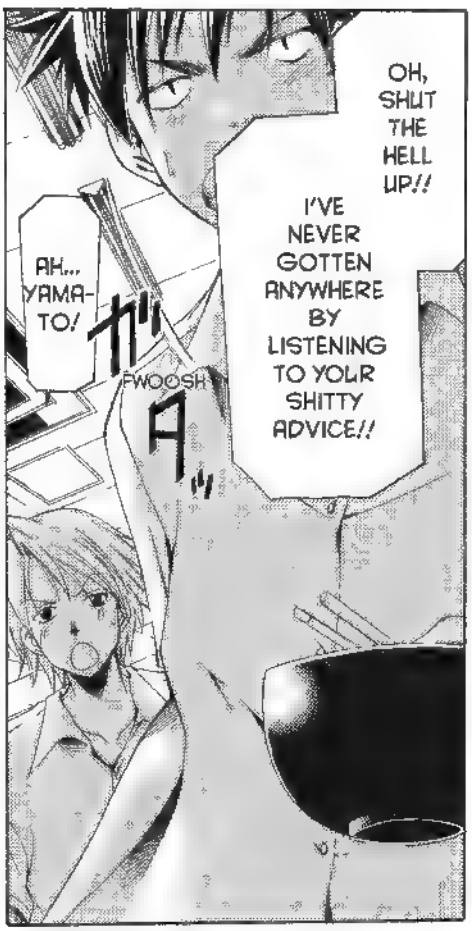
BUT EVEN SO, SHE TRIED TO ACCEPT YOUR GIFT WITHOUT MAKING AN ISSUE OUT OF IT.
...YEAH, I KNOW.
YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO PICK OUT SOMETHING REALLY SPECIAL FOR ME, RIGHT?
THEN YOU HAD TO GO AND RUB IT IN BY GIVING HER ALL THE GORY DETAILS.
I SEARCHED ALL OVER THE PLACE FOR THE PERFECT GIFT BEFORE I FINALLY FOUND SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR HER...
I REALLY TRIED HARD!
IT ALWAYS COMES BACK TO THE SAME THING, MAN. YOU ONLY THINK ABOUT YOURSELF!
TH-THAT'S NOT TRUE!!


.....
ALL YOU EVER END UP DOING IS PISSING OFF SAKURAI...
THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. THAT'S WHAT'S SO SELFISH ABOUT IT.

THE LONGER YOU WAIT, THE HARDER IT'S GONNA GET.
ANYWAY, YOU'VE GOTTA APOLOGIZE RIGHT AWAY.

JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!
I CAN HANDLE THIS ON MY OWN.

WHAT-EVER...


OH, SHUT THE HELL UP!!
I'VE NEVER GOTTEN ANYWHERE BY LISTENING TO YOUR SHITTY ADVICE!!
AH... YAMA-TO!
FWOOSH

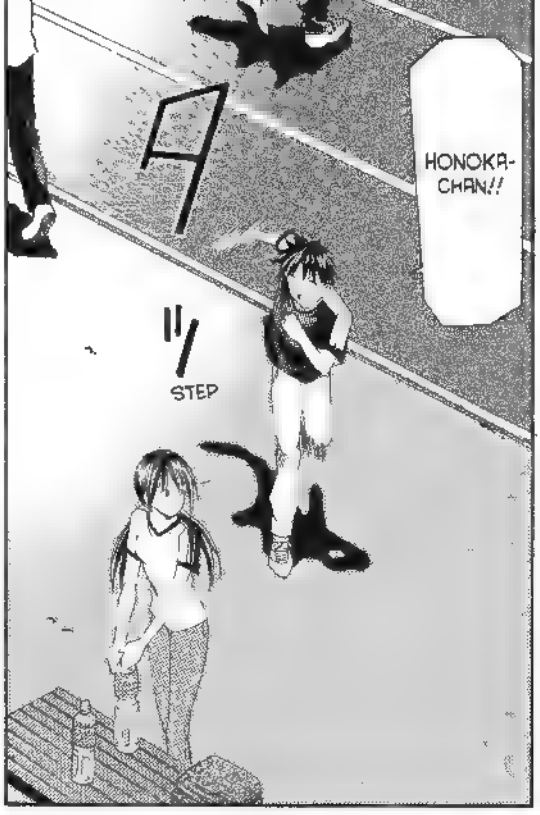
SHUT UP!!
LIKE, YOU'RE NOT GONNA GO APOLO-GIZE TO HER RIGHT NOW...

YOINK
キョロ
YOINK
キョロ

I PROBABLY SHOULD GO APOLOGIZE . . .
I GUESS . . .

ALL RIGHT, GUYS, LET'S GET WARMED UP!
OKAY!

THERE SHE IS.


HONOKA-CHAN!!
STEP

U-UM...
ABOUT YESTER-DAY...

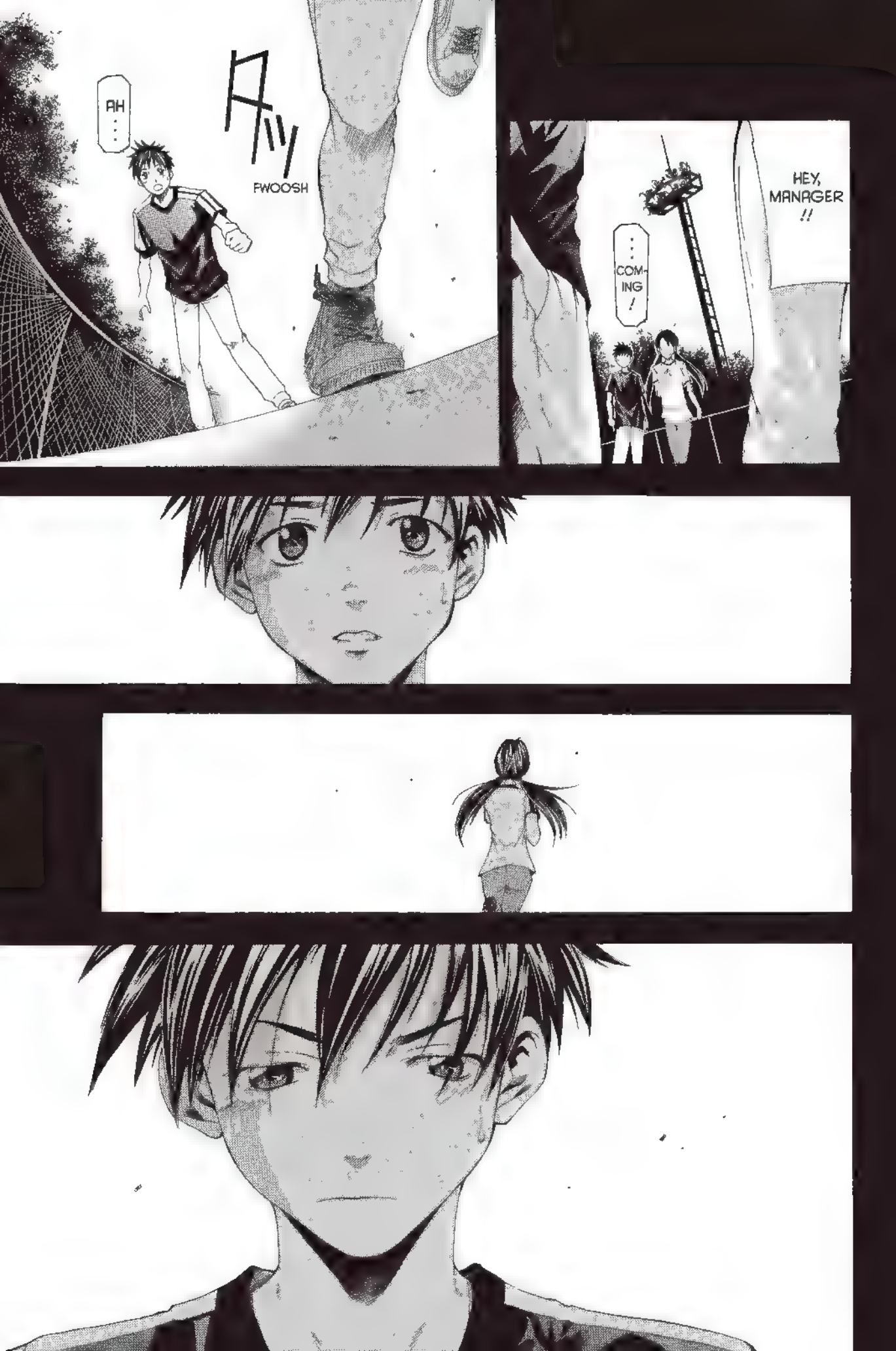
.....

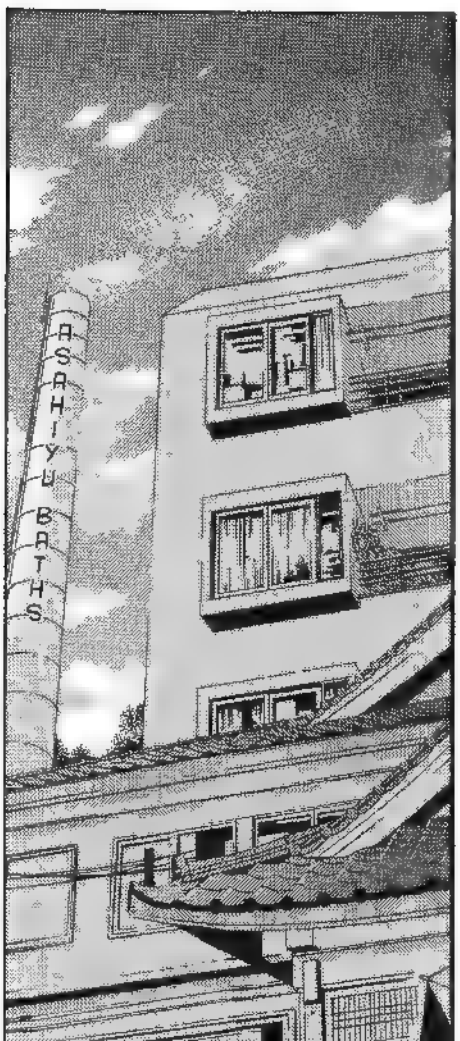
H-HEY! WAIT, WAIT A SECOND!

I WANNA TALK TO YOU ABOUT YESTERDAY...
.....

FWOOSH

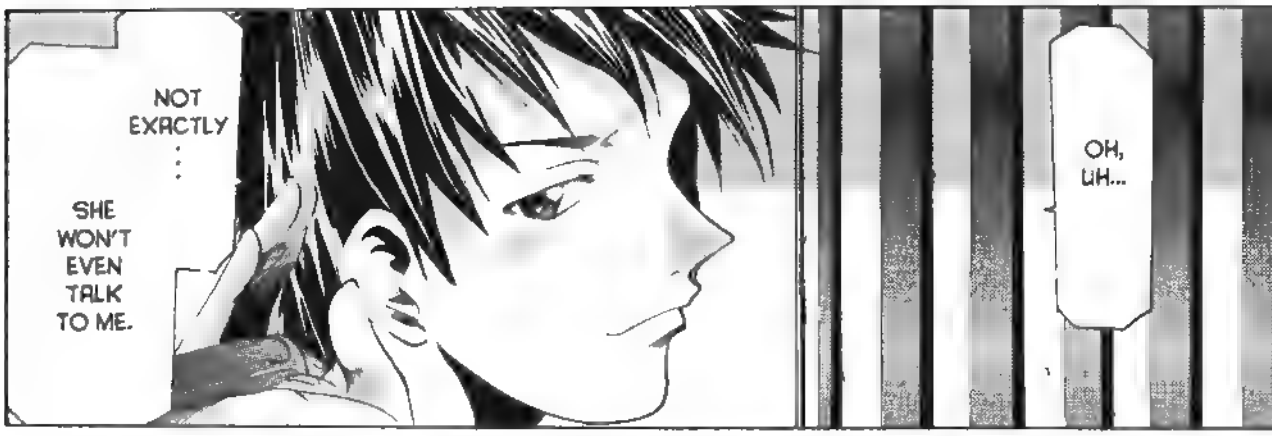
I'M SORRY, BUT...
I DON'T WANNA TALK TO YOU RIGHT NOW, AKITSUKI-KUN.
WHAT...
W-WHY?
WILL YOU AT LEAST LISTEN TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY?
.....
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT.


AH...
PWOOSH
HEY, MANAGER !!
...COMING!


ASAHIYU BATHS

YAMATO-KUN.

HUH ?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ASAHINA?
AH... YAMATO-KUN.
DID YOU AND HONOKA-CHAN MAKE UP?


NOT EXACTLY . . .
SHE WON'T EVEN TALK TO ME.
OH, UH...

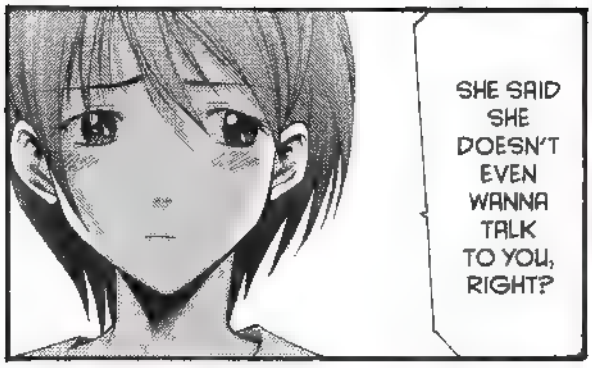
WHAT...

WHAT?
. . . I'M SORRY.

I JUST WANTED TO SAY SORRY, BUT SHE WOULDN'T EVEN LET ME DO THAT.
. . . . . .

WHY ARE YOU APOLOGIZING?
BE-CAUSE . . .
ASAHIYUBATHS

IF I HADN'T GONE SHOPPING WITH YOU, YOU TWO NEVER WOULD'VE GOTTEN INTO A FIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
THAT'S WHY I SAID SORRY...
BUT...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I WAS THE ONE WHO MADE YOU COME ALONG.
YASUNOBU WAS RIGHT.
I WAS BEING TOTALLY INCONSID-ERATE. IT WAS ALL MY FAULT.
SO YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL BAD AT ALL.
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
OKAY...
.....


SHE SAID SHE DOESN'T EVEN WANNA TALK TO YOU, RIGHT?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
. . .
YEAH.

BUT, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO NOW...?
HUH?

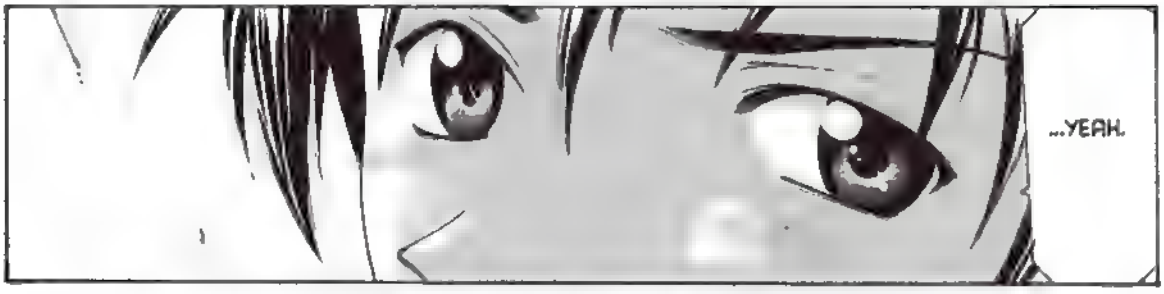
. . . . . .

I'M PRETTY SURE SHE HATES ME NOW...
I REALLY DIDN'T THINK SHE WAS THAT MAD.

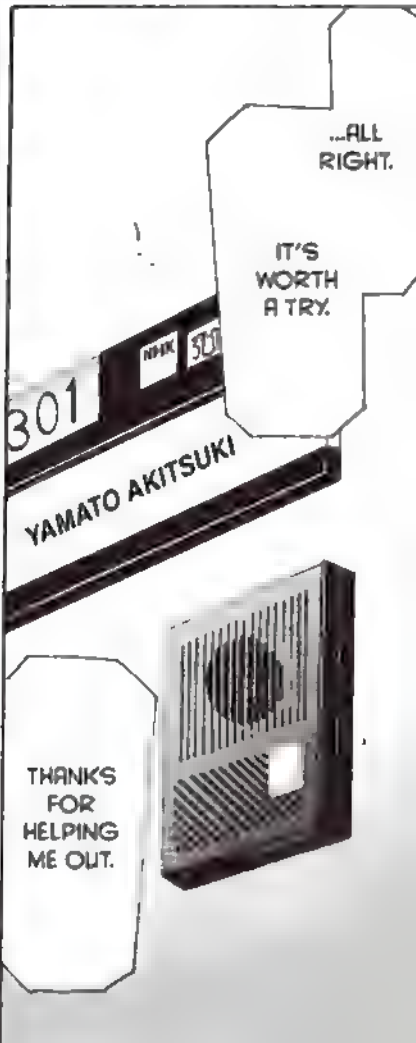
WHAT?
THAT'S NO* TRUE...
I'M SURE SHE'LL TALK TO YOU IF YOU TRY HARD ENOUGH
EVEN IF SHE IS ANGRY...
...YEAH.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?
I THINK SO

WHY DON'T YOU TRY CALLING HER AGAIN?
RIGHT NOW.

TRUST ME!
I-I DON'T KNOW.

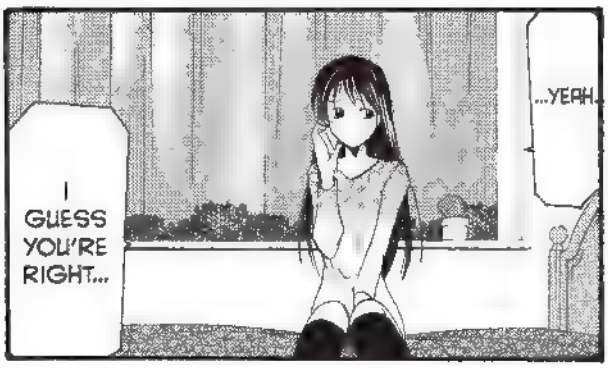

...YEAH.

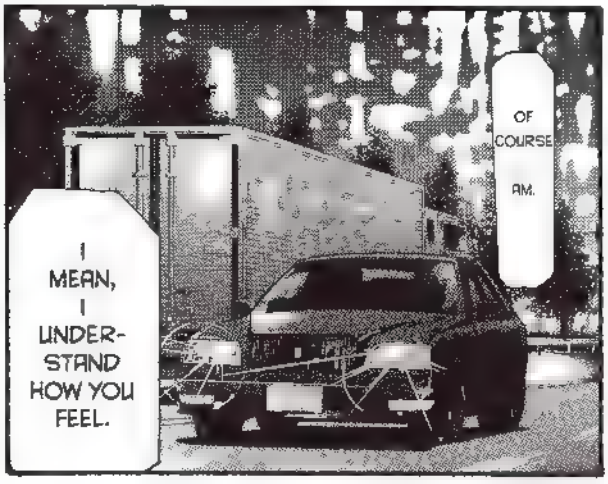
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.


...ALL RIGHT.
IT'S WORTH A TRY.
301
YAMATO AKITSUKI
THANKS FOR HELPING ME OUT.

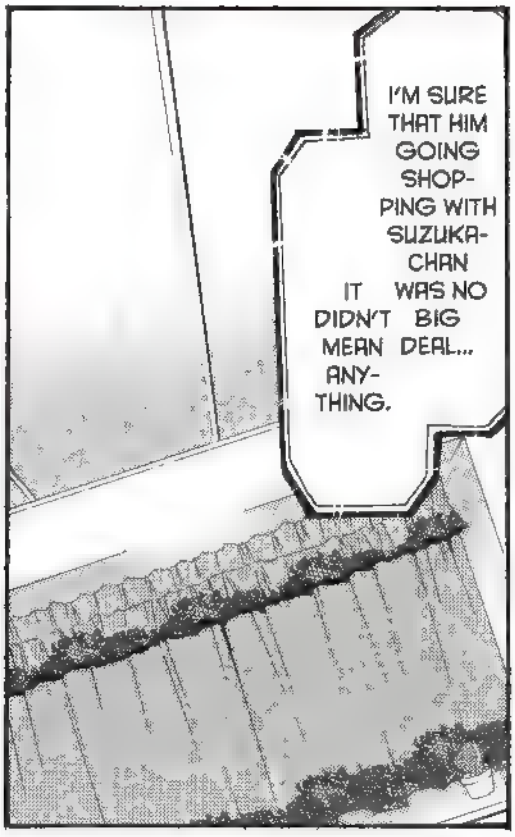
I HOPE...
YOU GUYS CAN WORK THINGS OUT

I BET YAMATO-KUN WAS SO FOCUSED ON FINDING THE PERFECT PRESENT FOR YOU, THAT HE WASN'T EVEN THINK-ING ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE..
I MEAN... HE'S LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW... HE'S CLUELESS.


I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...
...YEAH.

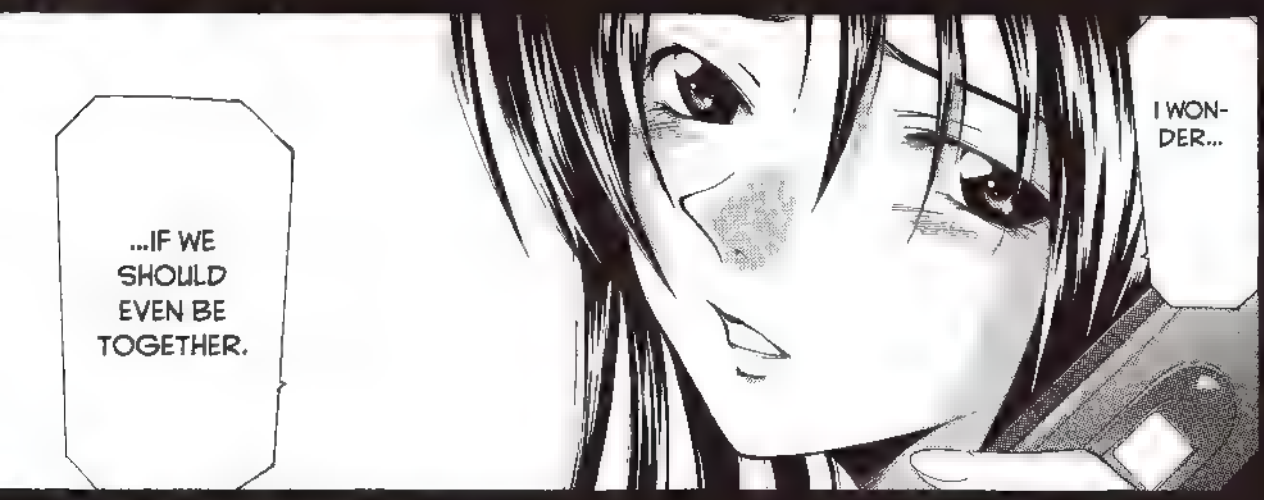

I MEAN, I UNDER-STAND HOW YOU FEEL.
OF COURSE I AM.

WHAT...?
BUT, IT SURE DIDN'T LOOK THAT WAY...

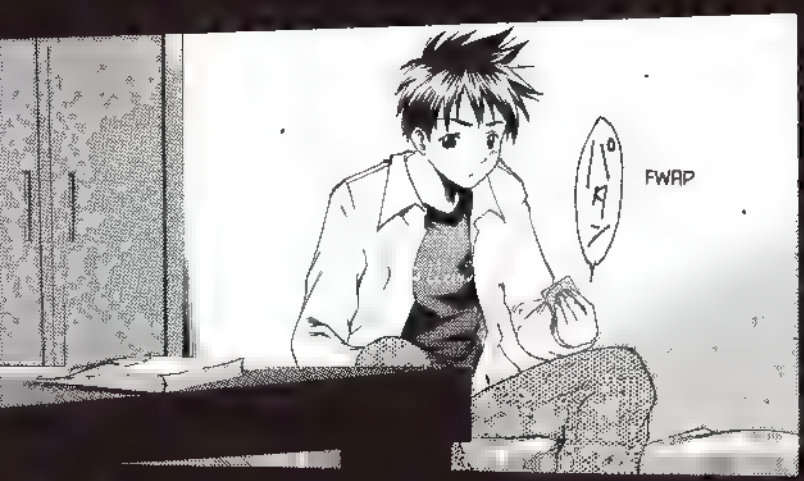

I'M SURE THAT HIM GOING SHOP-PING WITH SUZUKA-CHAN WAS NO BIG DEAL... IT DIDN'T MEAN ANY-THING.

I THINK HE STILL LIKES ASAHINA-SAN...

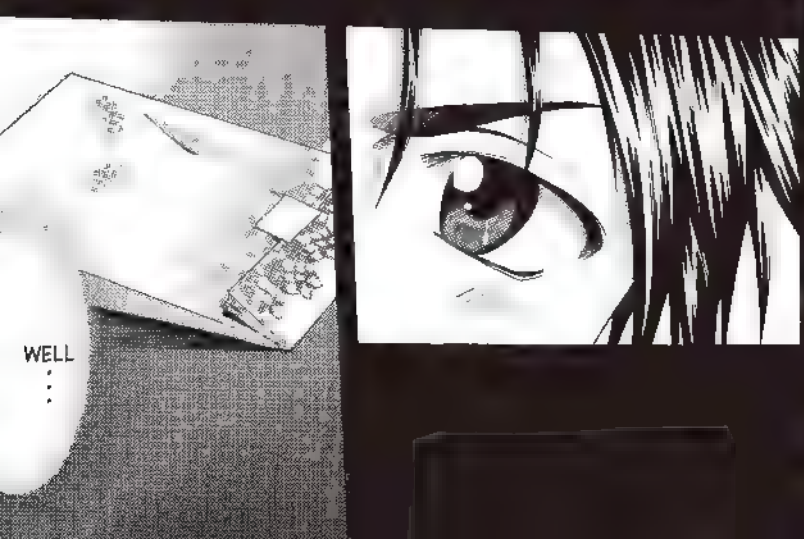
I WONDER...
...IF WE SHOULD EVEN BE TOGETHER.
HUMM...
ツー!
BEEP
ツー!
BEEP
THAT'S WEIRD...
IT'S STILL BUSY...


I WON-
DER...
...IF WE
SHOULD
EVEN BE
TOGETHER.

I'M SURE
SHE'LL
TO TALK
TO YOU
IF YOU
TRY HARD
ENOUGH.
EVEN IF
SHE IS
ANGRY...

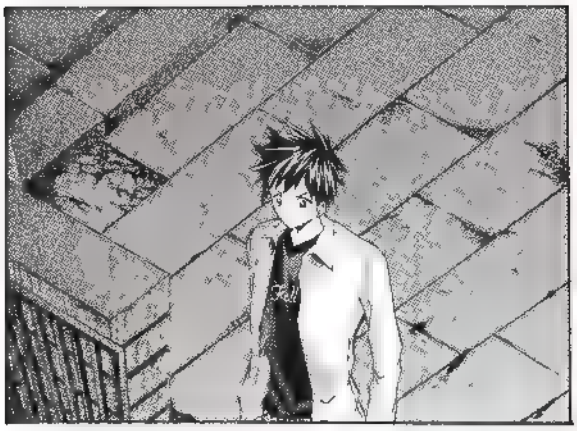

FWAP

BEEP
BEEP
IT'S
STILL
BUSY...


WELL
...

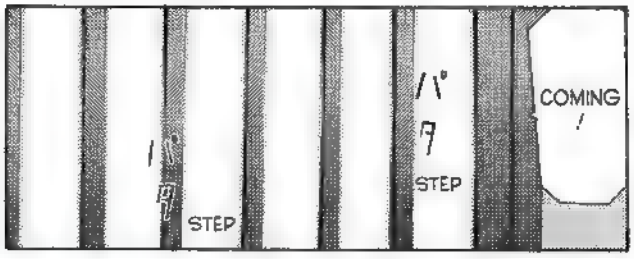
SUZUKA

#52 PARTING



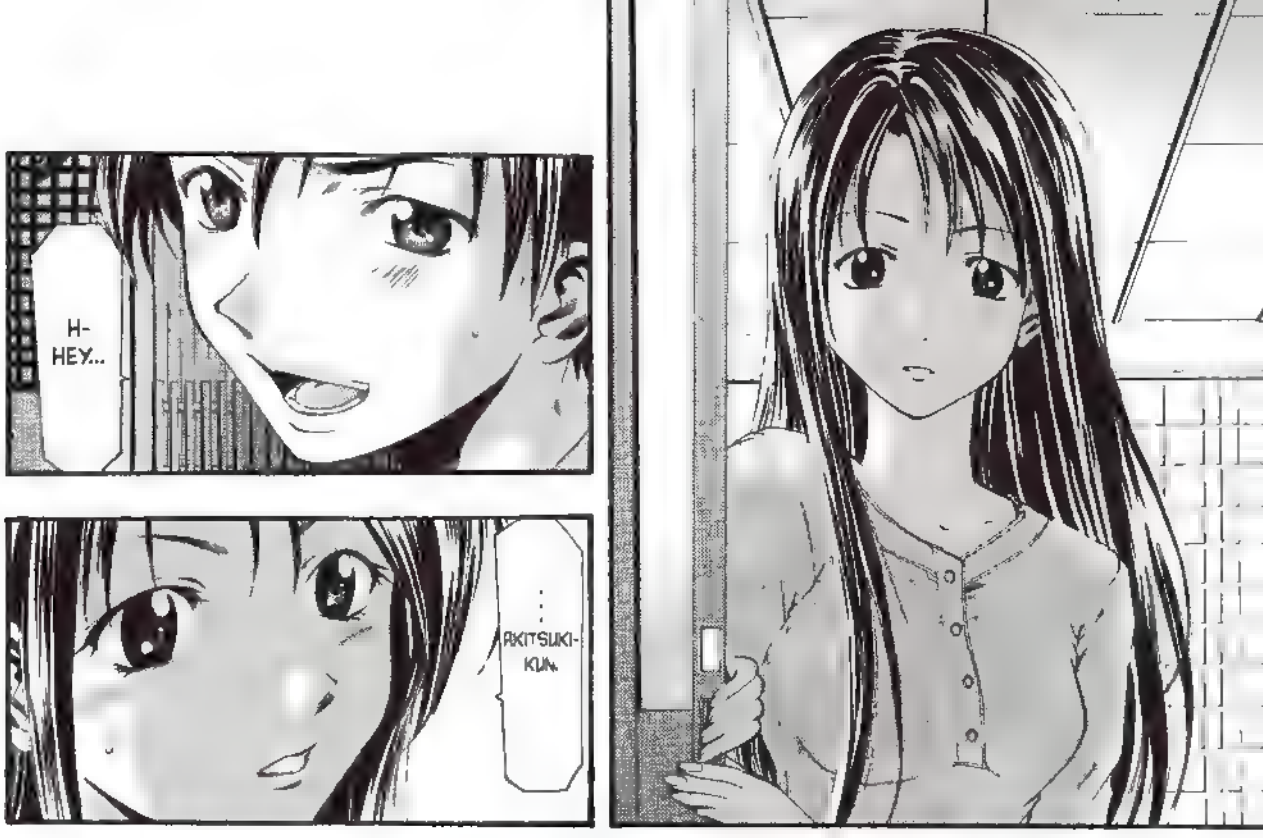
I'M SORRY, BUT...
I DON'T WANNA TALK TO YOU RIGHT NOW, AKITSUKI-KUN.

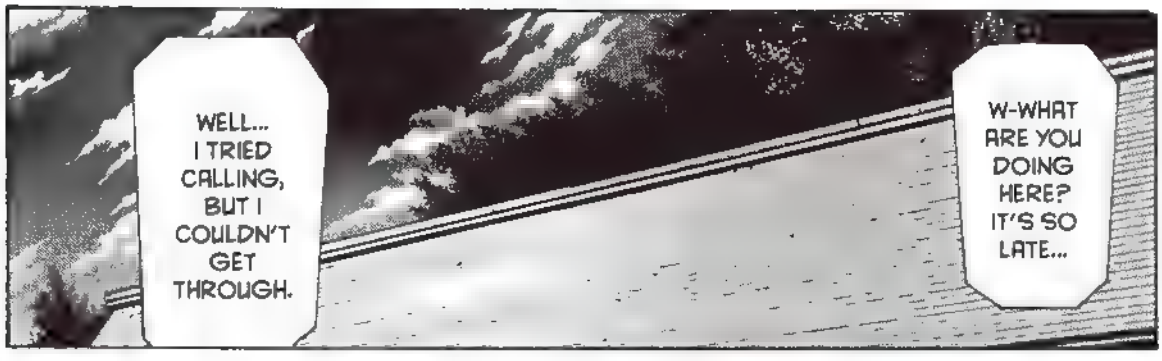
.....


STEP
STEP
COMING!

.....

STANDING AROUND WORRYING ABOUT IT ISN'T GONNA HELP ANYTHING!
ピンポーン
DING
DONG
I'VE GOTTA MAKE A MOVE!!


H-
HEY...
...
AKITSUKI-
KUN.


WELL...
I TRIED
CALLING,
BUT I
COULDN'T
GET
THROUGH.
W-WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?
IT'S SO
LATE...

I...
...REALLY
WANT
YOU TO
HAVE
THIS.
...
HERE.

I TOLD YOU, I DON'T WANT IT ...
.....
IF THAT'S WHY YOU CAME HERE THEN PLEASE, JUST GO.
HEY...
WAIT!!
I HEARD IT WAS YOUR BIRTHDAY, SO I TRIED AS HARD AS I COULD TO COME UP WITH A GOOD GIFT FOR YOU.
SO...WHY CAN'T YOU JUST BE HAPPY?

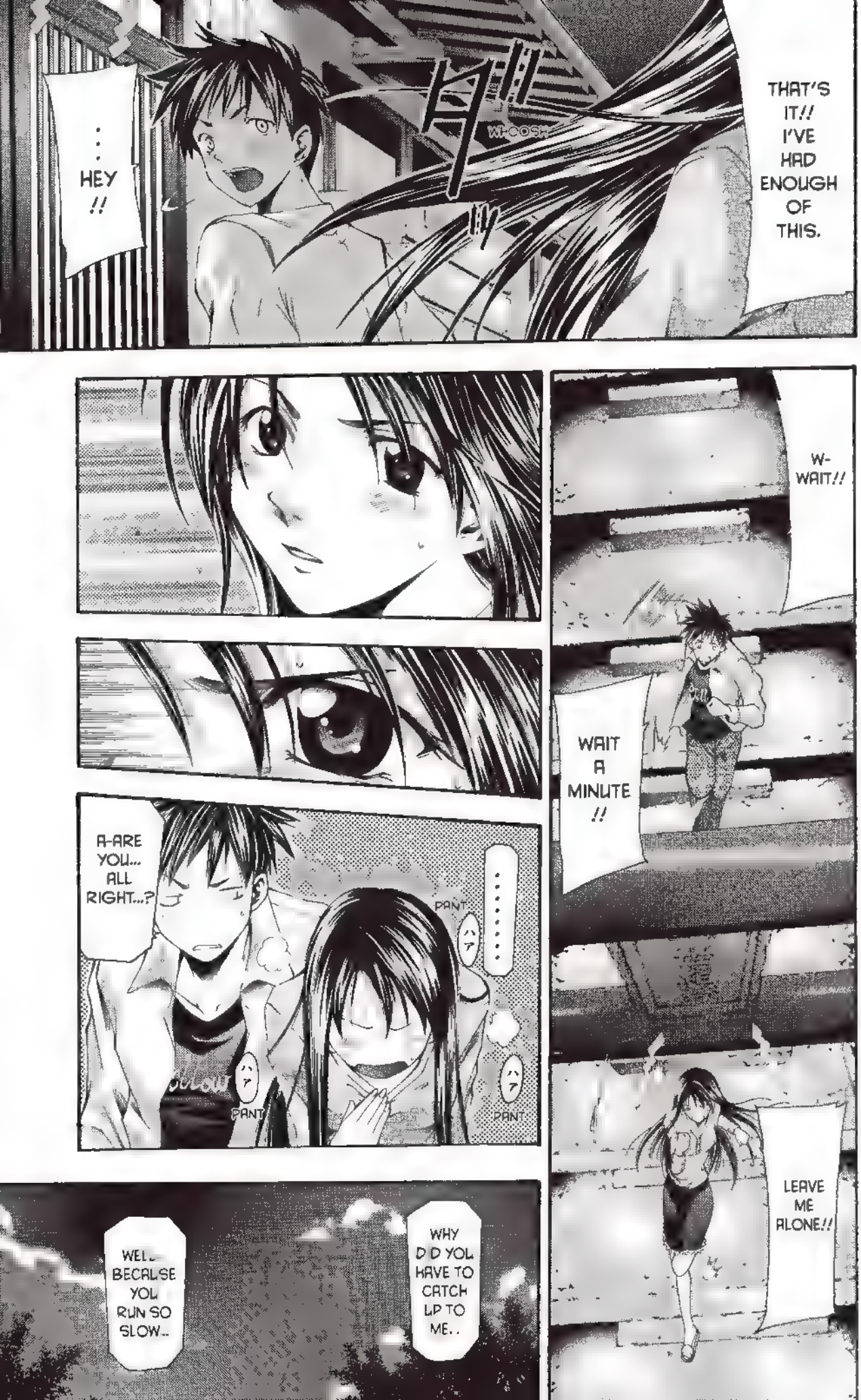
IF YOU'VE GOT SOME-THING TO SAY THEN JUST SAY IT?!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON!
I TRIED TO BE HAPPY...
WHAT?
BUT YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING SO MUCH FUN SHOPPING FOR MY PRESENT WITH ASAHINA-SAN...
HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO BE HAPPY!
I ALREADY TOLD YOU, I ONLY DID THAT BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO GET YOU, SO I HAD TO...
YOU COULD'VE ASKED SOMEONE ELSE!!
WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE ASAHINA-SAN?!

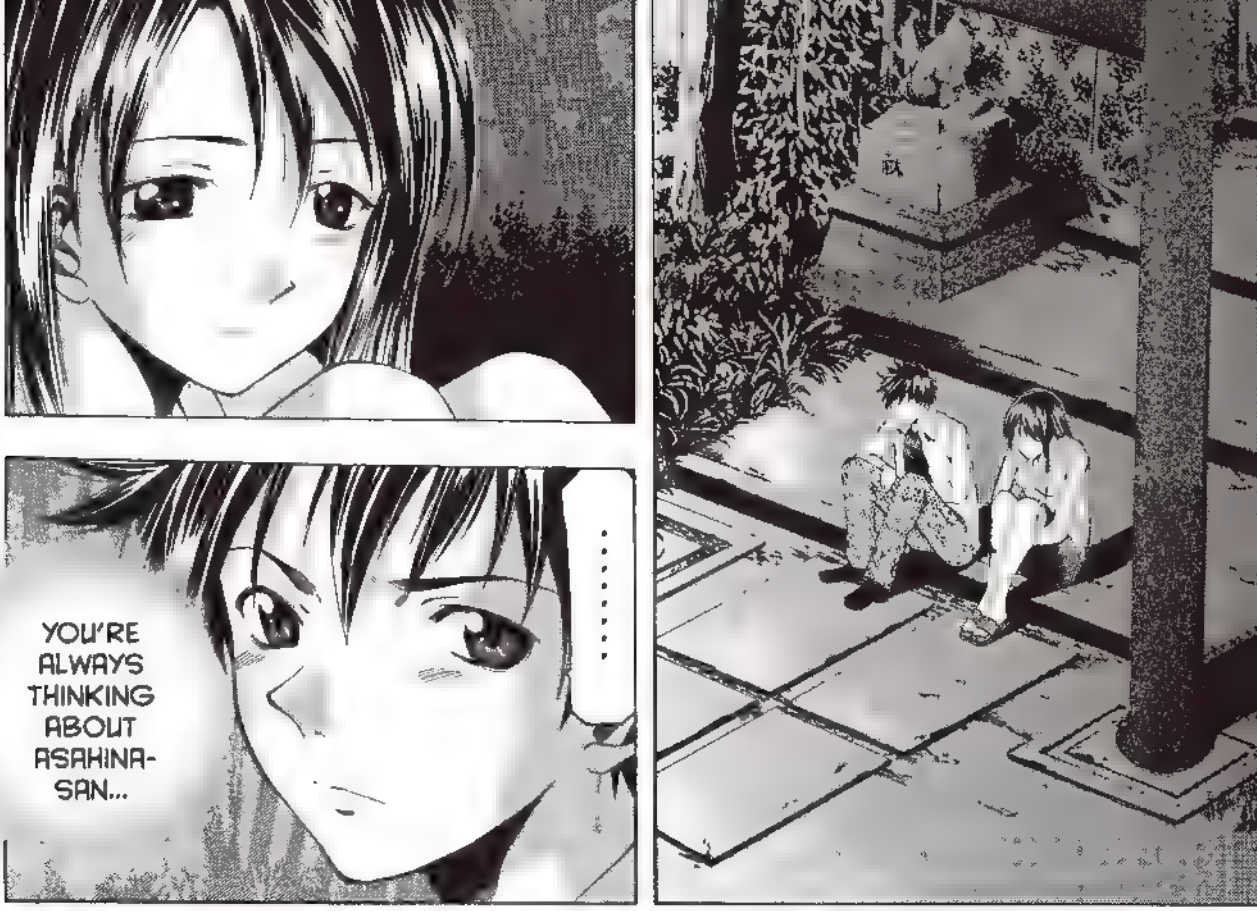
...WANTED TO GO OUT WITH HER!
MAYBE YOU JUST...
I KNOW THAT'S THE TRUTH.
NO IT ISN'T!!
W-WHAT? THAT'S RIDICULOUS!!
YOU CAN MAKE ALL THE EXCUSES YOU WANT, BUT I CAN TELL... EVERY TIME I LOOK AT YOU I CAN TELL!
YOU'RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT ASAHINA-SAN.

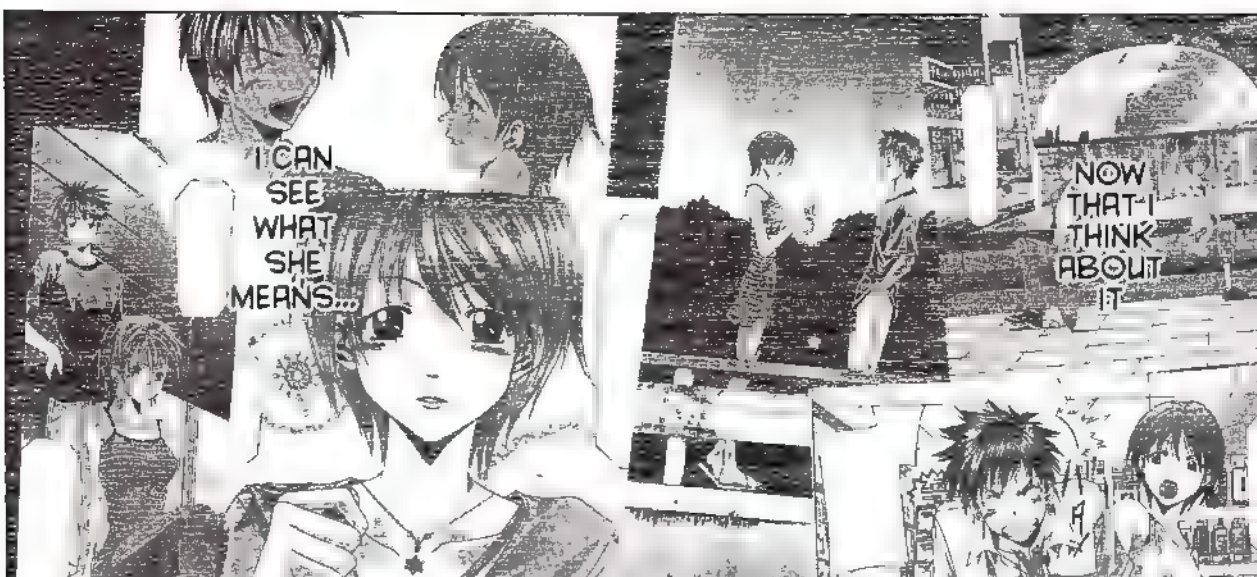
YOU STILL LIKE ASAHINA-SAN DON'T YOU?!
WAY MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER LIKE ME...

ALL RIGHT, ENOUGH ALREADY! JUST SHUT UP!
I DON'T WANNA HEAR ANOTHER WORD ABOUT ASAHINA !!

WAHHH

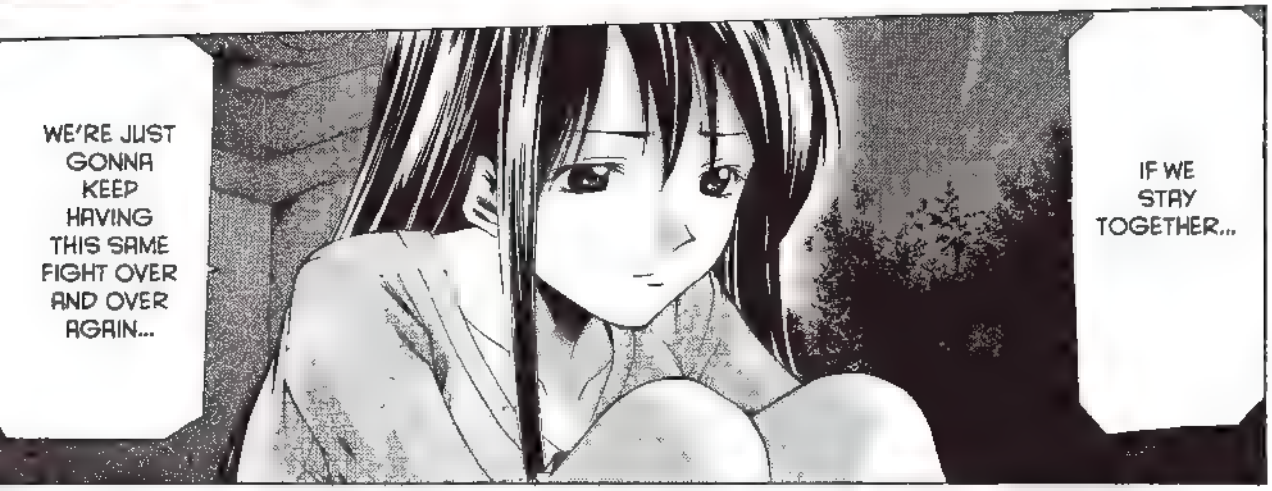

THAT'S IT!! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS.
W-COSH
HEY !!
W-WAIT!!
WAIT A MINUTE !!
LEAVE ME ALONE!!
A-ARE YOU... ALL RIGHT...?
PANT
PANT
PANT
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO CATCH UP TO ME..
WELL... BECAUSE YOU RUN SO SLOW...


YOU'RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT ASAHINA-SAN...
.....


I CAN SEE WHAT SHE MEANS...
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT

IT PROBABLY LOOKED LIKE I WAS HOPING SOMETHING WOULD HAPPEN BETWEEN THE TWO OF US.
FOR SOME REASON, IT SEEMS LIKE I WAS ALWAYS AROUND ASAHINA...

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I MIGHT BE HURTING HONOKA-CHAN'S FEELINGS...


WE'RE JUST GONNA KEEP HAVING THIS SAME FIGHT OVER AND OVER AGAIN...
IF WE STAY TOGETHER...

WE SHOULD JUST BREAK UP.
MAY-BE...

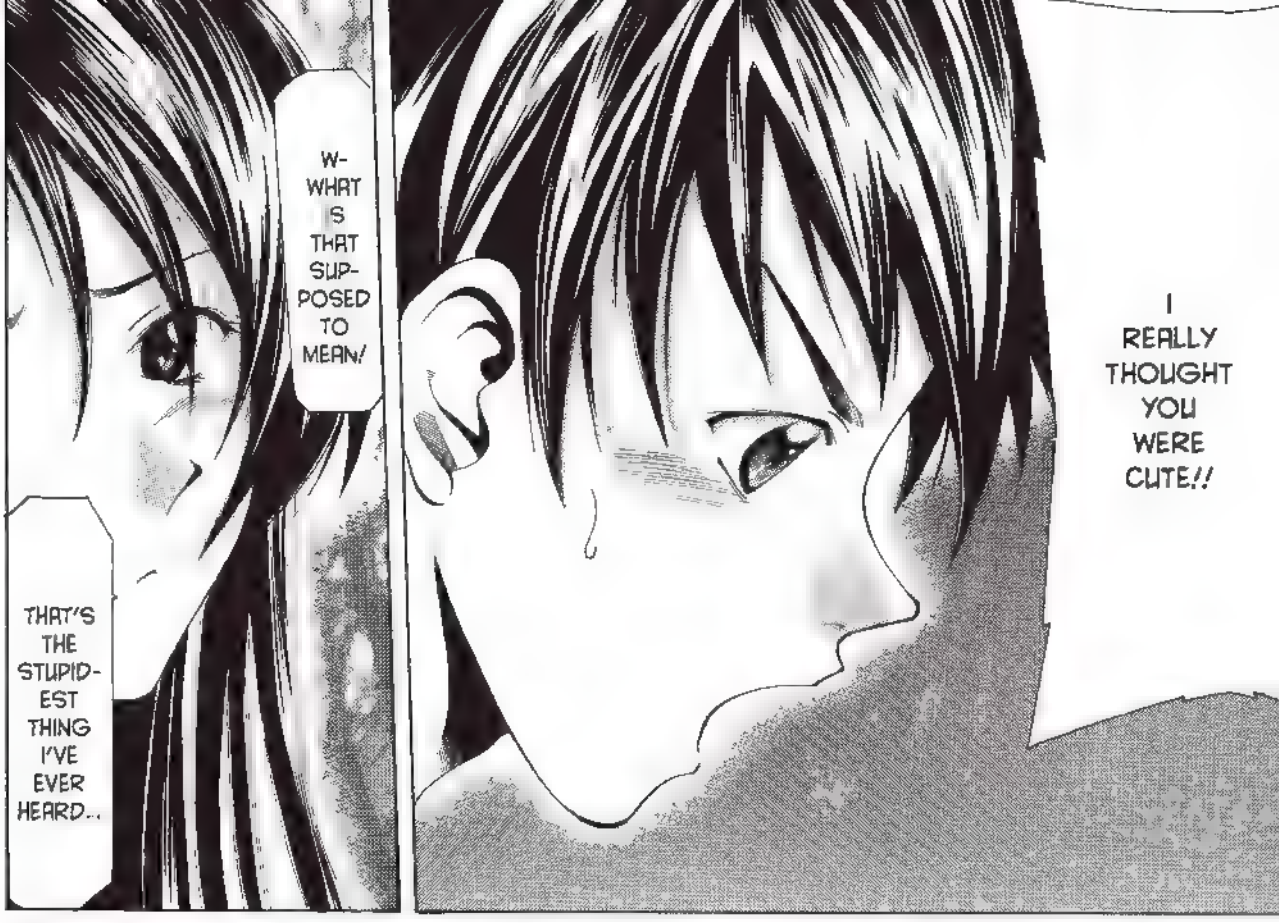
.....

...MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.

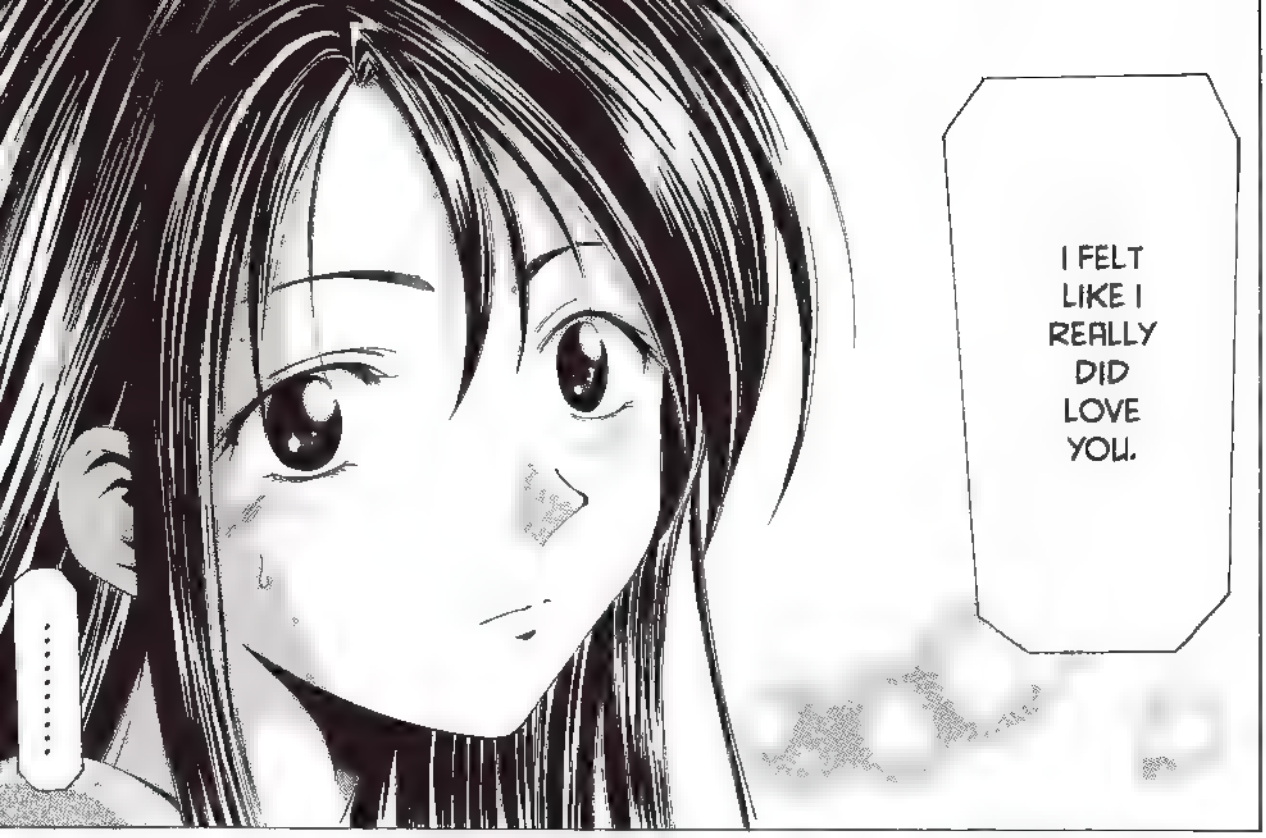
...YEAH.

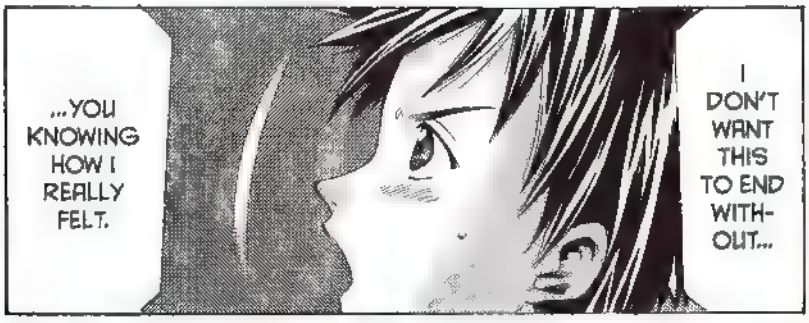
YEAH.

...YOU JERK!
...WHAT?
YOU NEVER SHOULD'VE SAID YOU WANTED TO BE WITH ME IN THE FIRST PLACE.
...JERK
.....
...I'M SORRY.
DID YOU GO OUT WITH ME JUST BECAUSE I KISSED YOU?
N-NO!!
THEN WHY...?
THOUGHT.
...WHAT?


I REALLY THOUGHT YOU WERE CUTE!!
W-WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN!
THAT'S THE STUPIDEST THING I'VE EVER HEARD...

EH...
YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT ASAHINA ALL THAT TIME!
AND...
WHEN I WAS TRYING TO DECIDE WHAT TO GET YOU FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY...
WHEN WE WALKED TO SCHOOL TOGETHER . . .
AND WHEN YOU COOKED FOR ME...

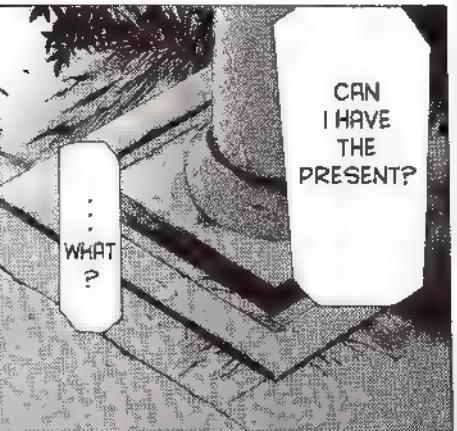

I FELT LIKE I REALLY DID LOVE YOU.
.....


...YOU KNOWING HOW I REALLY FELT.
I DON'T WANT THIS TO END WITH-OUT...

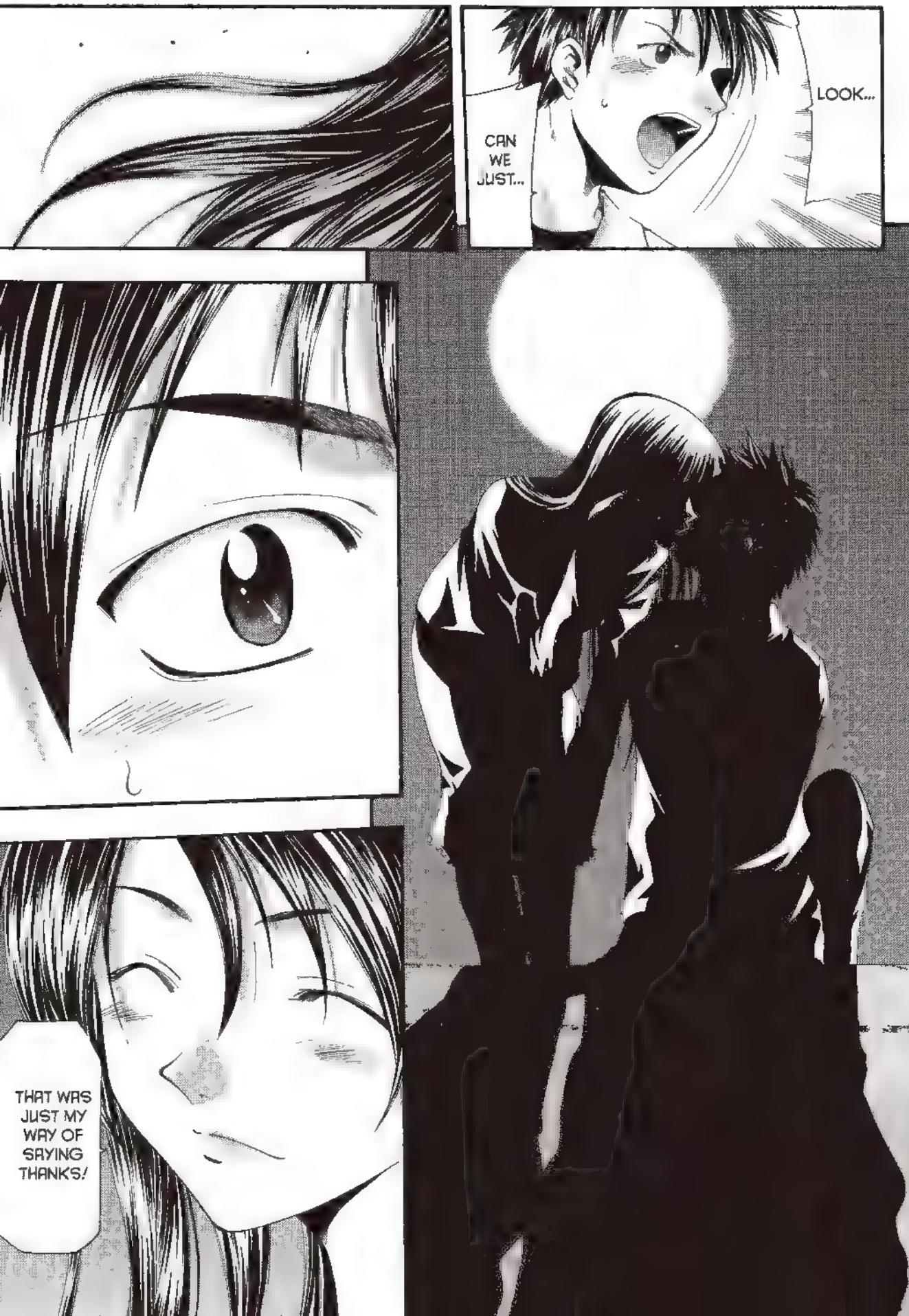
W-WHY ARE YOU SAYING THIS? IT'S TOO LATE TO...
BE-CAUSE.....!

...HEY.

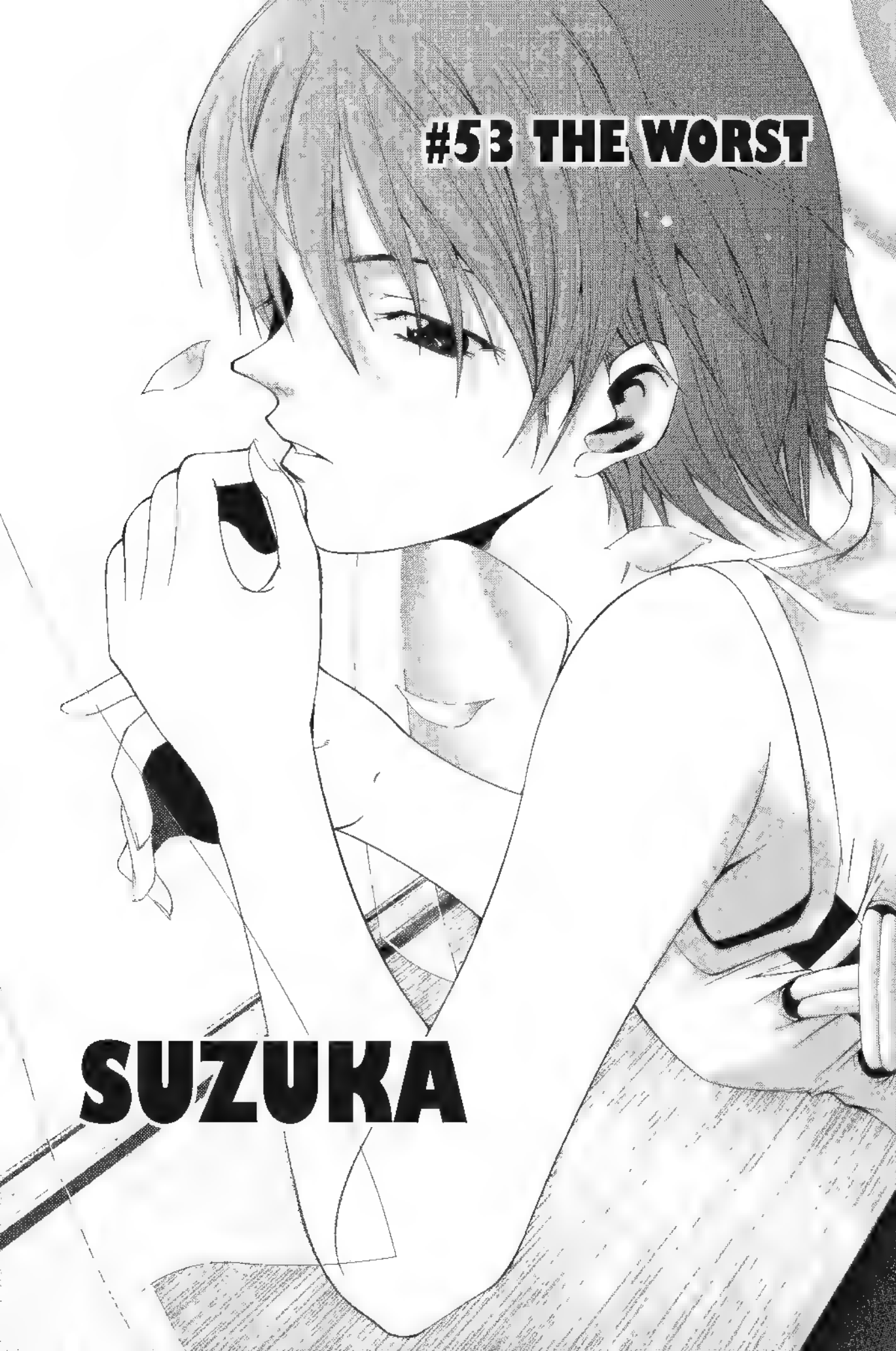
.....


CAN I HAVE THE PRESENT?
...WHAT?

YEAH, SURE... BUT WHY NOW?
. . . WELL
IT DIDN'T LAST VERY LONG, BUT...
...AT LEAST I'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO REMIND ME OF WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER.
THANK YOU.
I'LL TREASURE IT ALWAYS...
UM...
HONOKA-CHAN...
.....


CAN WE JUST...
LOOK...
THAT WAS JUST MY WAY OF SAYING THANKS!

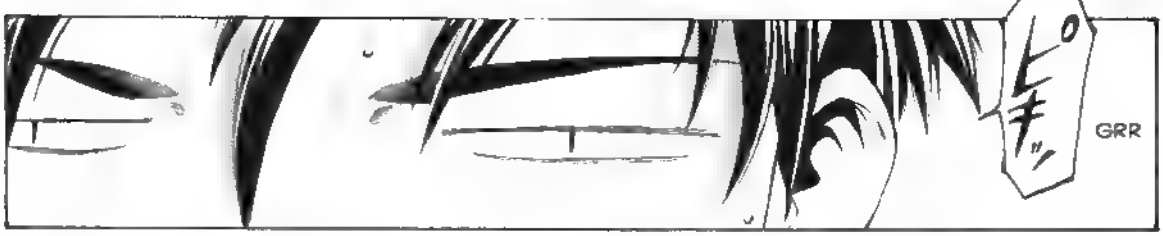
BYE...
.....
...OKAY
BYE...


#53 THE WORST
SUZUKA

BYE...

カ
CLOP
カン
CLOP
カ
CLOP
BATHS
ASAHINA-SAN...
YOU'RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT...
SUZUKA ASAHINA
IS THAT TRUE...?
カ"
CLOCK
チャ
HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT ASAHINA...
I DON'T EVEN KNOW MYSELF...

HEY, YOU'RE HOME LATE.
H-HOPE YOU DON'T MIND US HANGING OUT HERE...


GRR

DON'T WORRY. I'M USED TO THIS KINDA STUFF NOW.
CLICK
I'M SORRY, YAMATO-KUN. SAOTOME-SAN MADE ME COME...

FIRST YOU SNEAK INTO MY ROOM AND NOW YOU'RE GONNA LECTURE ME, HUH?
A YOUNG HIGH SCHOOL BOY LIKE YOU SHOULDN'T BE OUT SO LATE.

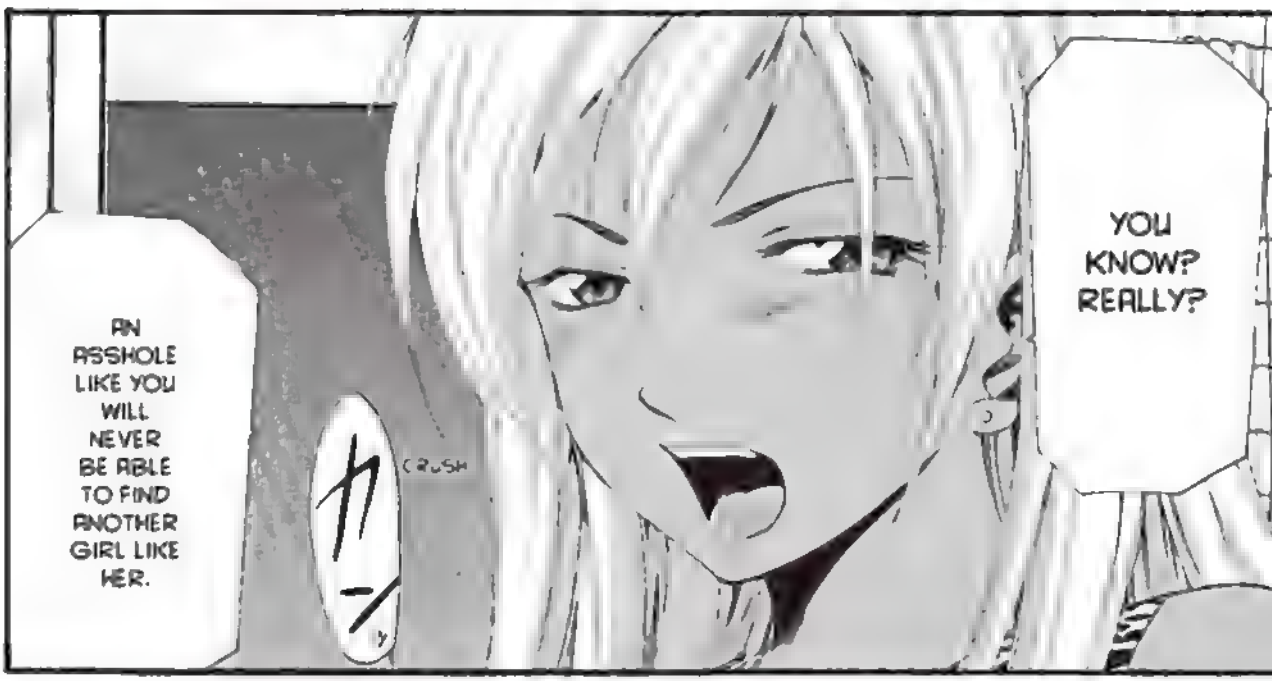
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...
YOU WERE HOPING TO BRING HONOKA-CHAN BACK HERE AND DO SOMETHING NAUGHTY, BUT SHE TURNED YOU DOWN, RIGHT?
SUNTORY
Bar
PLUM WINE
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD. WHY DON'T YOU COME JOIN US AND HAVE A DRINK?
SHUT UP... JUST GO HOME ALREADY.
OH, REALLY?
I WOULD NEVER DO THAT!

...SHIT!!
THEN WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
IT SURE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A BALLOON...
G-GIVE IT!!
HERE, CATCH, MEGUMI-CHAN.
FWUMP

GIVE IT BA–
OHUH!?
WAH...
WHAT'S WRONG? I JUST WANTED TO GET A 'YAMATO PUTS THE MOVES ON A COLLEGE CO-ED, WITH CONDOM IN HAND' SHOT.
HMMM... I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS KIND BEFORE.
FOR-GET IT.
WON'T BE NEEDING THAT THING ANYWAY.
FALUMP

WE JUST...
...BROKE UP.
.....
WHAT? DID YOU GET INTO A FIGHT WITH HONOKA-CHAN OR SOMETHING?
HUH? WHY?!
WHAT?!
SHE DIDN'T DUMP ME AND I DIDN'T DUMP HER...
IT WASN'T LIKE THAT.
YOU GUYS JUST STARTED GOING OUT A MONTH AGO, RIGHT? WHY DID SHE DUMP YOU, YAMATO-KUN?!
OH, SHUT UP...
.....

YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT.
WHO WOULD BREAK UP WITH SUCH A NICE GIRL?
I KNOW. I KNOW


YOU KNOW? REALLY?
CRUSH
AN ASSHOLE LIKE YOU WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO FIND ANOTHER GIRL LIKE HER.

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GOOD LOOKING OR RICH OR ANY-THING..
I WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE YOU THE TIME OF DAY.
.....

COME ON, SAOTOME-SAN, QUIT TEASING HIM LIKE THAT.
OH, LOOK AT THAT FACE, WHAT'RE YOU GONNA CRY NOW?
STOP IT, SAOTOME-SAN!
OH MY GOD! JUST LOOK AT HIS FACE!
YAMATO-KUN.
IT'S OVER, ALL RIGHT! SO JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!!
DID HE BREAK UP... WITH HONOKA-CHAN?
W-WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

PLUNK
TICK
TOCK
TICK
WHAT KIND OF AN ATTITUDE IS THAT!!
SORRY . . . .
. . . . I KNOW
. . . HUH ?
POUND
POUND~
YOU MIGHT BE READY, BUT MAYBE SHE WASN'T READY! EVER THINK OF THAT?
READY? READY FOR WHAT?
HUH?!

Y-YEAH, I'M LISTENING!!
SMACK
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!
UM...
IF YOU DO THAT...
AND WHEN YOU SAY NO, THEY LOOK AT YOU LIKE "WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, BITCH"...
HMMPH, MEN...
ALL THEY THINK ABOUT IS GETTING LAID!!
POKE
POKE
SMACK
YOU'RE NEVER GONNA USE IT ANYWAY!!
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH BOOZE FOR YOU...
PA-LUNK
オロロ〜ン
AND THEN THEY'RE LIKE "IT'S OKAY, BABY. I'LL WEAR A RUBBER."
LIKE THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I SAID NO!!

COME ON, MEGUMI CHAN. LET'S GO HOME.
PLEASE WAIT
SNIFF SNIFF WAH-HHH!
...WELL, SOUND'S LIKE IT WAS ALL FOR THE BEST.
...WHAT?
WHY BOTHER KEEPING UP A HALF-ASSED RELATIONSHIP...
...BETTER TO JUST END IT...
...WELL, IT'S REALLY NONE OF MY BUSINESS. IT'S YOUR PROBLEM, NOT MINE.
CLICK
ガチャ
GOOD NIGHT.

SLAM
KNOCK
KNOCK
...I GUESS SHE'S RIGHT.
MAYBE IT IS ALL FOR THE BEST.
HEY...
CAN I TALK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE...?

SO, I KIND OF OVERHEARD YOU GUYS.
DID YOU TWO REALLY BREAK UP?
GRAB
PLUM WINE

YEAH.

WHY...?!
SHE WOULDN'T ACCEPT YOUR APOLOGY?!
CREAK

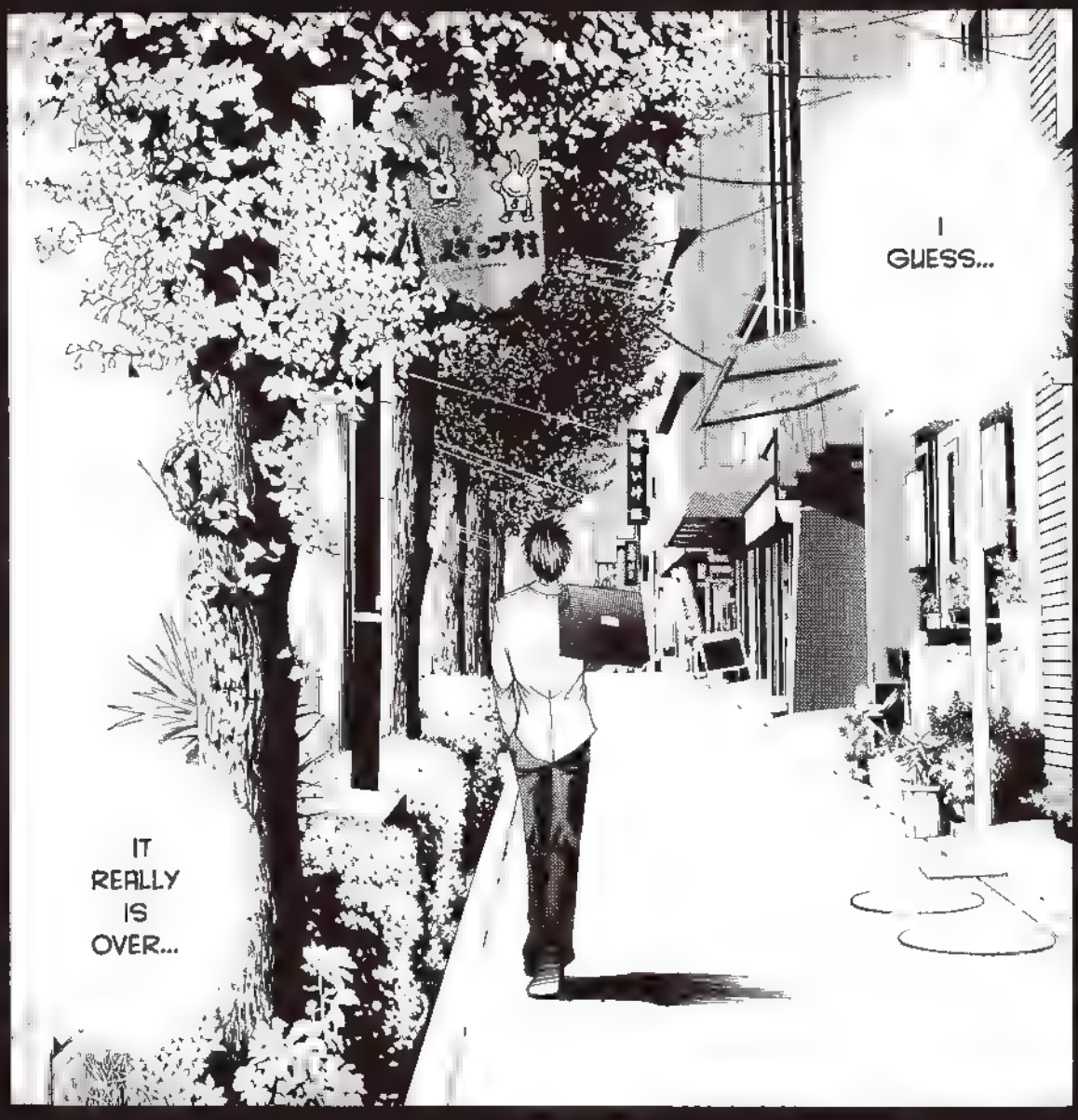
...IT WAS BE-CAUSE OF ME...
...WASN'T IT?
BUT YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING SO MUCH FUN SHOPPING FOR MY PRESENT WITH ASAHINA-SAN...
HOW CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO BE HAPPY!
IT'S BECAUSE I WENT SHOP-PING WITH YOU, ISN'T IT?
...WHAT?
I ENDED IT.
I BROKE UP WITH HER.

SHE WAS JUST SUCH A PAIN IN THE ASS!
SO I HAD TO BREAK UP WITH HER!
YOU KNOW, WE WERE NEVER REALLY A VERY GOOD MATCH.
IT ALWAYS ANNOYED ME THE WAY SHE SHOWED UP AT MY PLACE EVERY MORNING SO WE COULD WALK TO SCHOOL TOGETHER....
WHAT...?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
COME ON...
YOU DON'T REALLY MEAN THAT...
HUH? SURE I DO.

OF COURSE I DO. THAT'S WHAT WAS TOO MUCH FOR ME. ALL THAT PRESSURE...
YOU'RE NOT KIDDING...?
DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW MUCH THIS RELATIONSHIP MEANT TO HONOKA-CHAN?!
I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW!!
THAT'S WHY IT'S GOOD THAT WE BROKE UP!
...YOU ARE SUCH AN ASSHOLE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU.
HUH?
SLAM

WHAT AN IDIOT I AM...
.....
WHY DID I WASTE MY TIME TRYING TO HELP THAT ASSHOLE...?
HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO STUPID?

STEP
STEP
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE WALKED DOWN THIS ROAD ALL BY MYSELF
AKITSUKI-KUN...
SUZUKA



SUZUKA

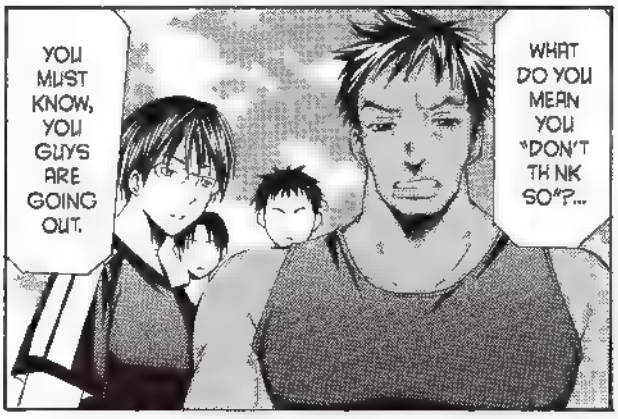
#54 DECISION

I WAS WALKING TOO SLOW. I'M GONNA BE LATE!!
FWOOSH
SHIT!!
DING
DONG
...HUH?
HEY...
HONOKA-CHAN...
G-GOOD M-MORNING!!
OH SHIT, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO SAY TO HER.
G-GOOD MORNING...

UH...
.....
.....
CLASS... IS ABOUT TO START.
HEY...

CHATTER
CHATTER
WHERE'S THE MAN-AGER?
HEY, MAN-AGER?!

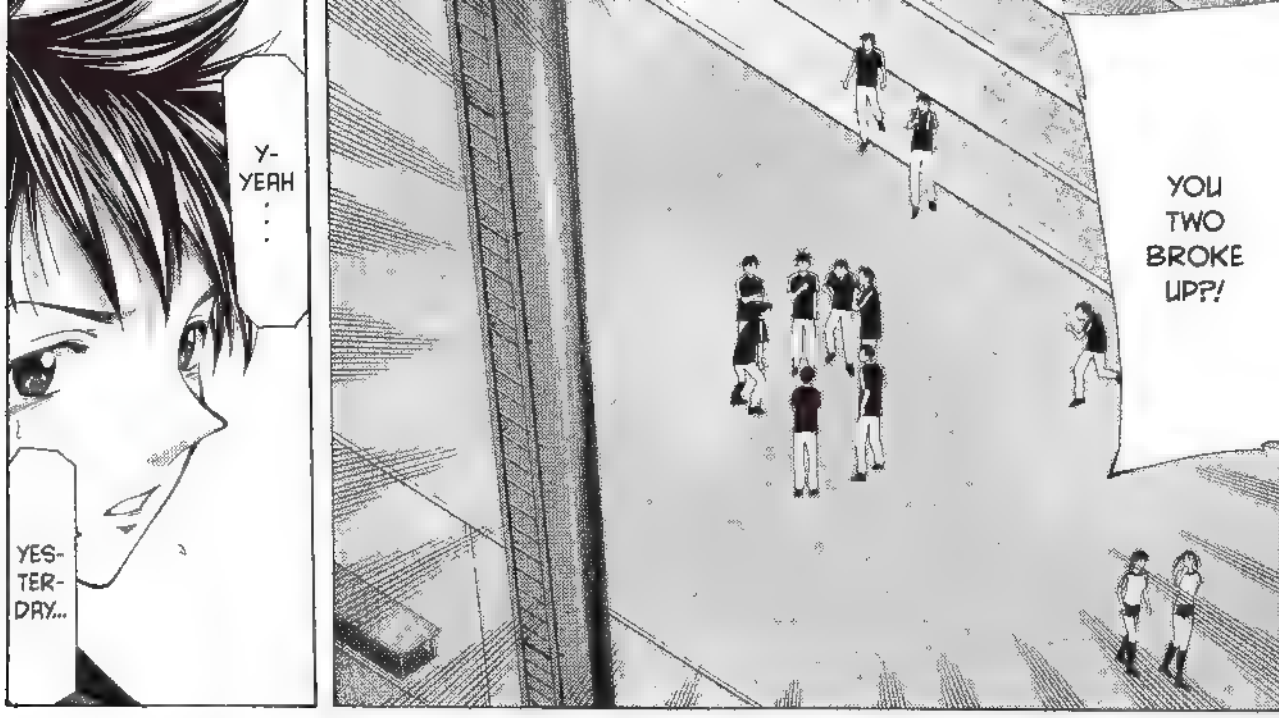
HUH...?
YO, AKITSUKI, HAVE YOU SEEN SAKURAI?


YOU MUST KNOW, YOU GUYS ARE GOING OUT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU "DON'T TH NK SO"?...

.....
I-I DON'T THINK SO...

...NOT ANY-MORE...

...WHAT?


Y-YEAH...
YES-TER-DAY...
YOU TWO BROKE UP?!

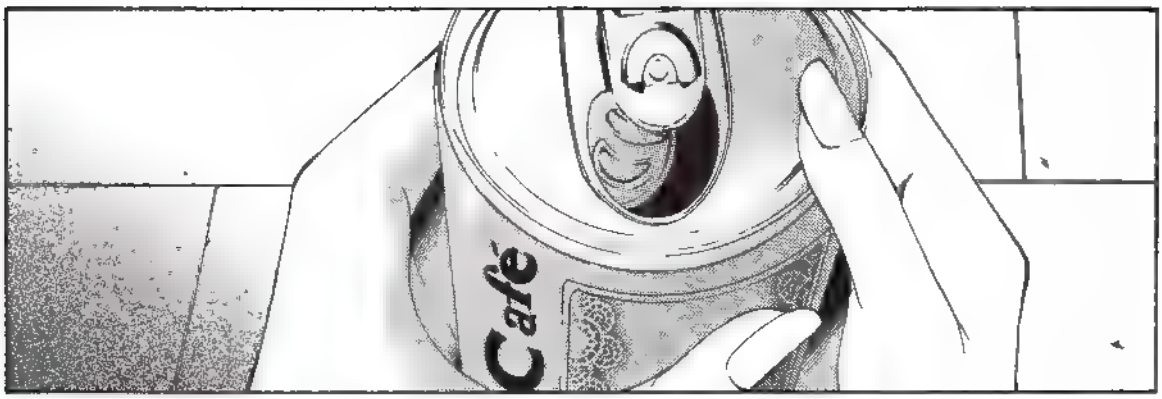
SHE'D BE TOO UNCOM-FORTABLE WITH YOU HERE!!
WHAT?!
FWAHHH
Y-YEAH'? IS THAT ALL YOU CAN SAY, MAN!! NO WONDER SAKURAI DIDN'T SHOW UP TODAY!!

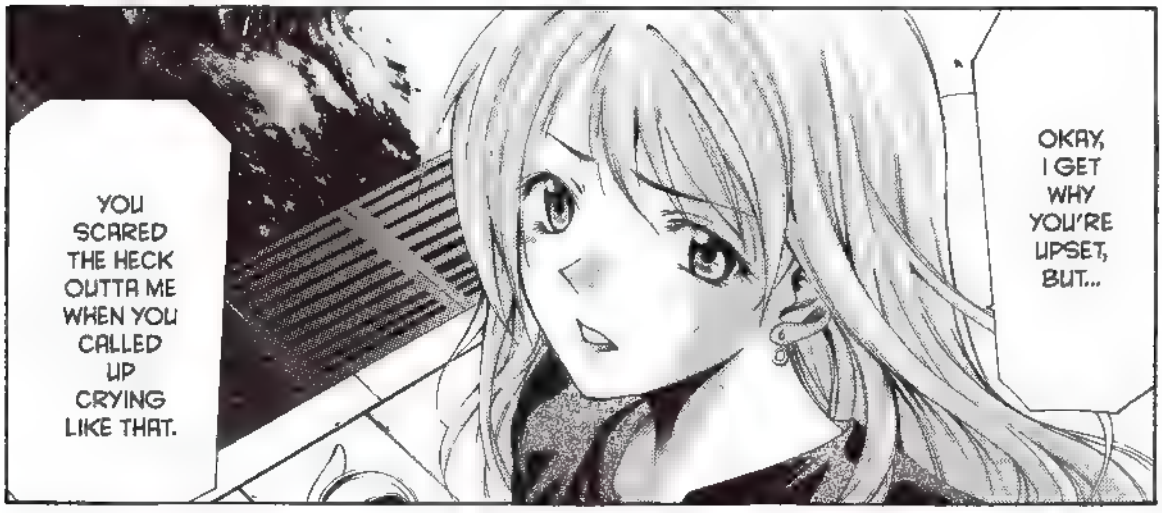
WELL, WHAT AM SUP-POSED TO DO...

STARTING TOMORROW YOU BETTER DO ALL OUR LAUNDRY AND STUFF, AKITSUKI
CLOPPA
CLOPPA
SHIT, NOW SAKURAI DEFINITELY WON'T SHOW UP.

SHIT, THIS IS BAD TIMING. WE'VE GOT THE FALL FRESH-MAN COMPETI-TION COMING UP.
THIS IS THE CHANCE I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
SPARKLE
WE'VE REALLY BEEN RELYING ON SAKURAI SINCE SHE JOINED UP.

I KIND OF FEEL SORRY FOR HIM...
PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BLAME HIM LIKE THAT...
IT SERVES HIM RIGHT.
AKITSUKI BROKE UP WITH SAKURAI-SAN, HUH?...
I LOOKS THAT WAY.
H-HEY, WAIT UP, SUZUKA.
COME ON, MIKI, YOU'D BETTER START WARMING UP.
OOPS. SORRY.
YEAH, NO PROB-LEM.
...BUT MY NAME IS KOBAY-AKAWA.
YOU ARE SO COOL...
NO PROB-LEM.
THANKS, KO-BAYASHI.
HA, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S SAID THAT.
I'M ON YOUR S DE, AKITSUK !
HUH....?
EVERYBODY IS SO MEAN. I'M SURE YOU GUYS HAD YOUR OWN SSUES TO DEAL WITH.


Café


YOU SCARED THE HECK OUTTA ME WHEN YOU CALLED UP CRYING LIKE THAT.
OKAY, I GET WHY YOU'RE UPSET, BUT...

...SORRY.
BRINGING YOU OUT HERE LIKE THIS, AND THEN MAKING YOU LISTEN TO MY...
NO, IT'S OKAY. I'VE GOT TODAY OFF ANYWAY.

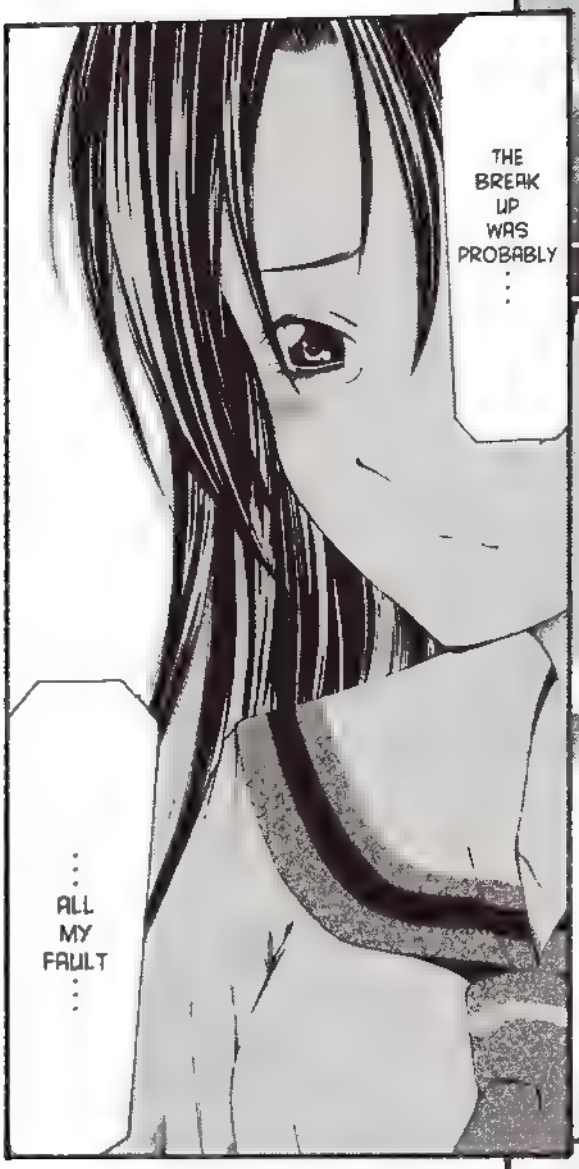
WHEN WE BROKE UP, I TRIED TO SMILE...
BUT WHEN I SAW AKITSUKI-KUN TODAY, I WAS SO SAD...

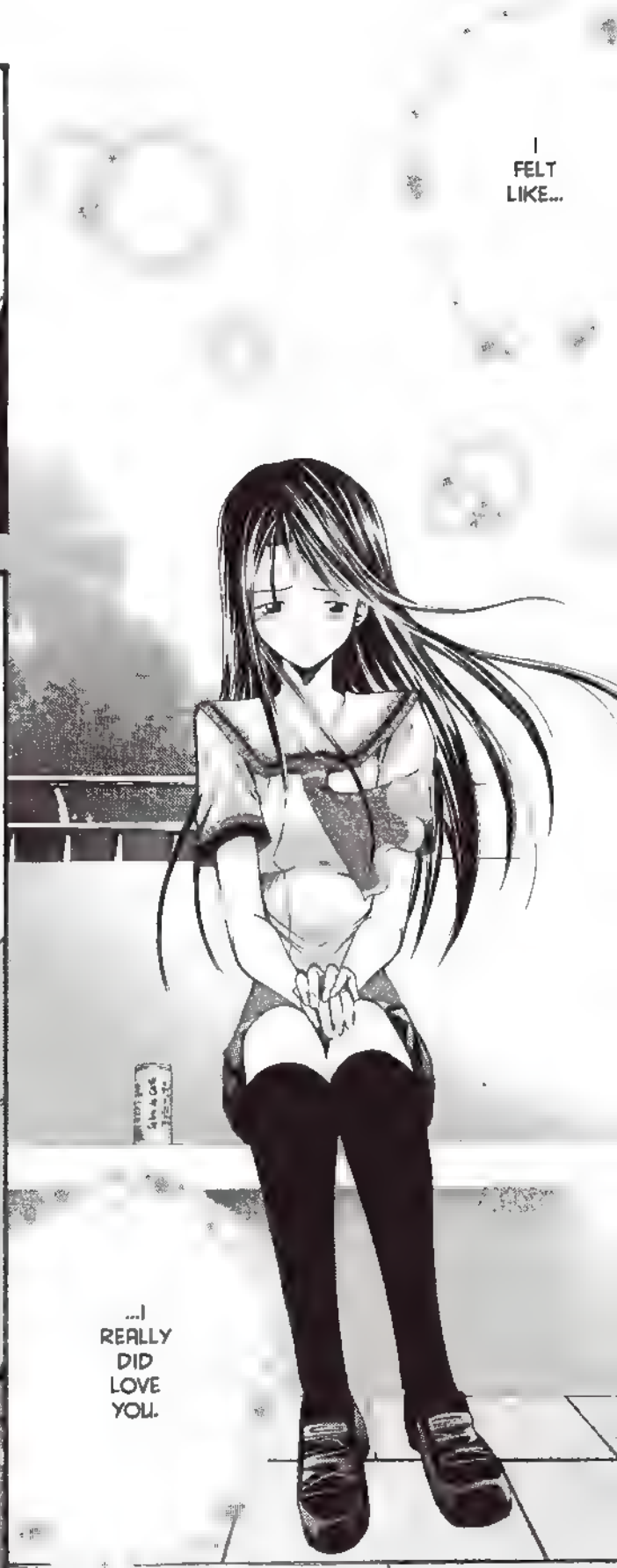
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I LIKE HIM...
HIS HEART WILL ALWAYS BE TAKEN... BY ASAHINA-SAN...
BUT, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY WITH JUST BREAKING UP WITH YAMATO-KUN LIKE THAT?
WHAT OTHER CHOICE DID I HAVE...
WHAT ?
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT.
.....
THRASHER
DID YAMATO-KUN EVER TELL YOU THAT...?
DID HE SAY THAT HE STILL LIKED SUZUKA-CHAN?
WELL... NO
...NOT EXACT-LY...

...MIGHT BE A BIT TOO INSECURE, HONOKA.
BUT YOU...
B-BUT!
I MEAN, SURE YAMATO-KUN HAS HIS BAD POINTS.
WHAT.....?
I...
.....
AM I WRONG?

I DON'T WANNA HEAR ANOTHER WORD ABOUT ASAHINA!!
ALL RIGHT, ENOUGH ALREADY! JUST SHUT UP!
I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT ASAHINA ALL THAT TIME!
YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT LIKE...
AND WHEN YOU COOKED FOR ME...
WHEN WE WALKED TO SCHOOL TOGETHER...

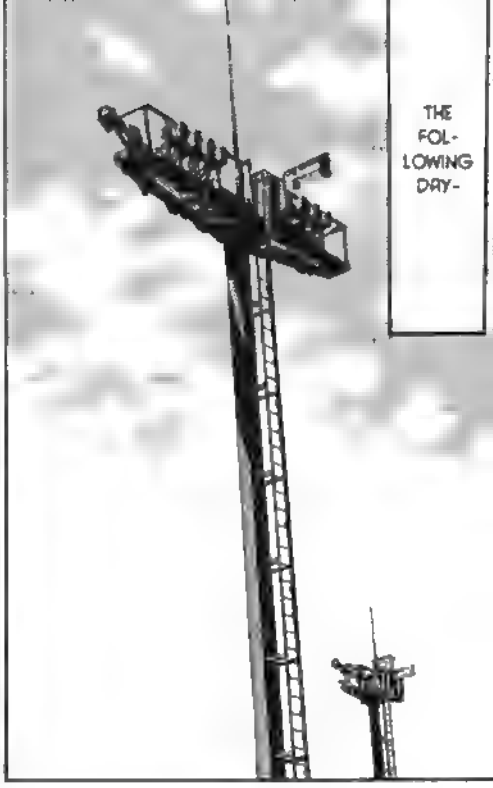
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT...
WHAT.....?


THE BREAK UP WAS PROBABLY.....
.....ALL MY FAULT.....


I FELT LIKE...
...I REALLY DID LOVE YOU.

IF ONLY I HAD A BIT MORE SELF CONFIDENCE
THEN I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH ALL THIS
HONOKA
DON'T WORRY! YOU'RE SUCH A CUTIE
I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND A NEW BOYFRIEND SOON
NANA CHAN
YOU NEVER KNOW THERE COULD BE A BOY THERE WHO'S GOT A CRUSH ON YOU
HE COULD BE RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE

LOOKS LIKE SAKURAI ISN'T HERE AGAIN TODAY.
GUESS YOU CAN'T BLAME HER...


THE FOL-LOWING DAY-

I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE RUNNING TODAY WONDER WHOSE FAULT THAT'S
YEAH, ME EITHER.

COME ON, QUIT SLACKING OFF, EVERY-BODY!!
TIME TO RUN SOME INTER-VALS!
ALL RIGHT...
I'M BEAT.

FWOOSH
FWOOSH
FWOOSH

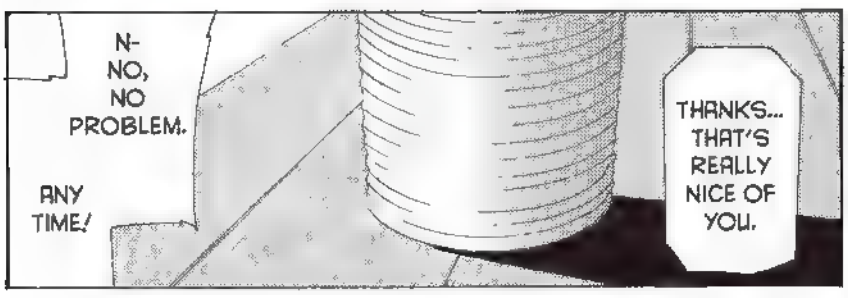
HAHH
HAHH
...HUH?

S-SORRY...
...ABOUT YESTERDAY.
OH...! SHE'S HERE!!
WOO HOO!
SAKURAI...
HONOKA-CHAN...
.....
IT'S ALL RIGHT!! HAVE A SEAT!!
WHAT?!
HUH?
UM... WOULD YOU LIKE SOME-THING TO DRINK??!
.....
ALL RIGHT THEN, LET'S GET STARTED!!
WOOO
YEAH!!
WOOO
WOOO

...
THERE YOU GO.

...
KOBAYAKAWA-KUN.

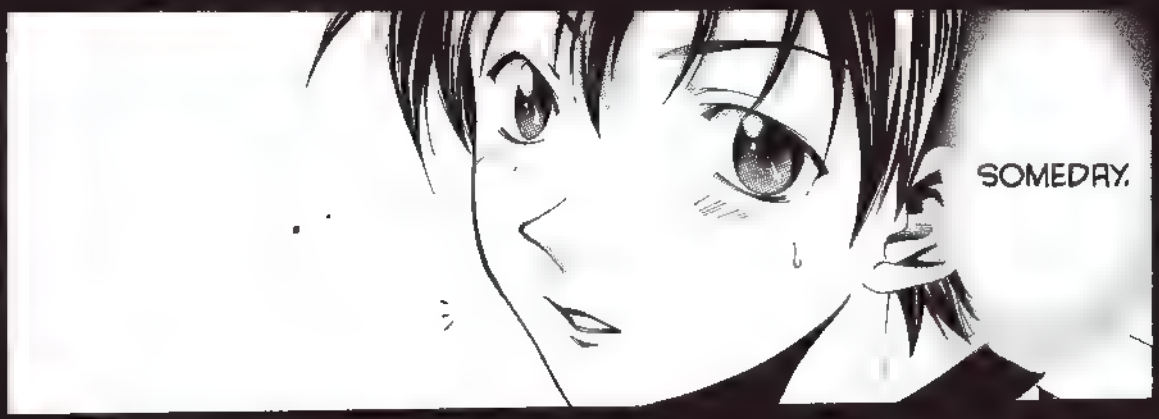
CH-CHEER UP, SAKURAI...

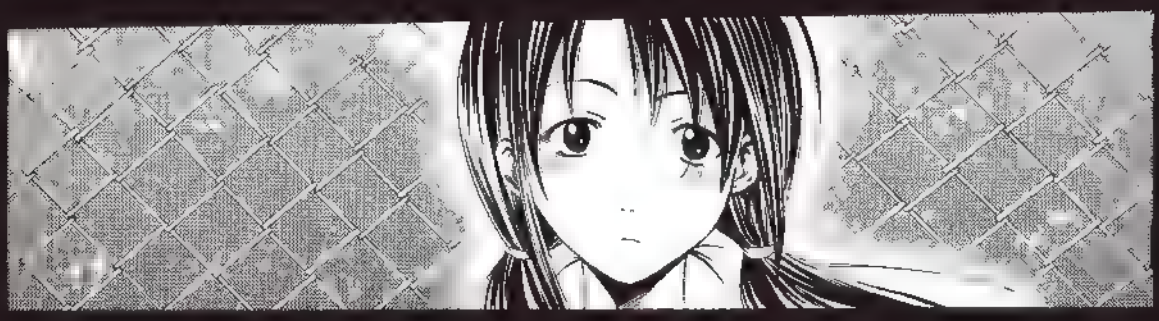

N-NO, NO PROBLEM.
ANY TIME!
THANKS... THAT'S REALLY NICE OF YOU.

WELL...
I KNOW YOU'VE GOT A LOT GOING ON, BUT, IF YOU EVER WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT, I'M HERE FOR YOU, OKAY?

YEAH.
I...
...HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS SINCE YESTERDAY, BUT...

DO YOU THINK THERE'S ANYTHING WRONG WITH WANTING TO GET BACK TOGETHER WITH...
...A GUY YOU JUST BROKE UP WITH?
BUT...
SOMEDAY, WHEN I'VE BECOME A MORE CONFIDENT PERSON...
OF COURSE, WE MIGHT JUST REPEAT THE SAME MISTAKES AGAIN.
IF WE DON'T CHANGE...
WHAT?
.....


SOMEDAY.

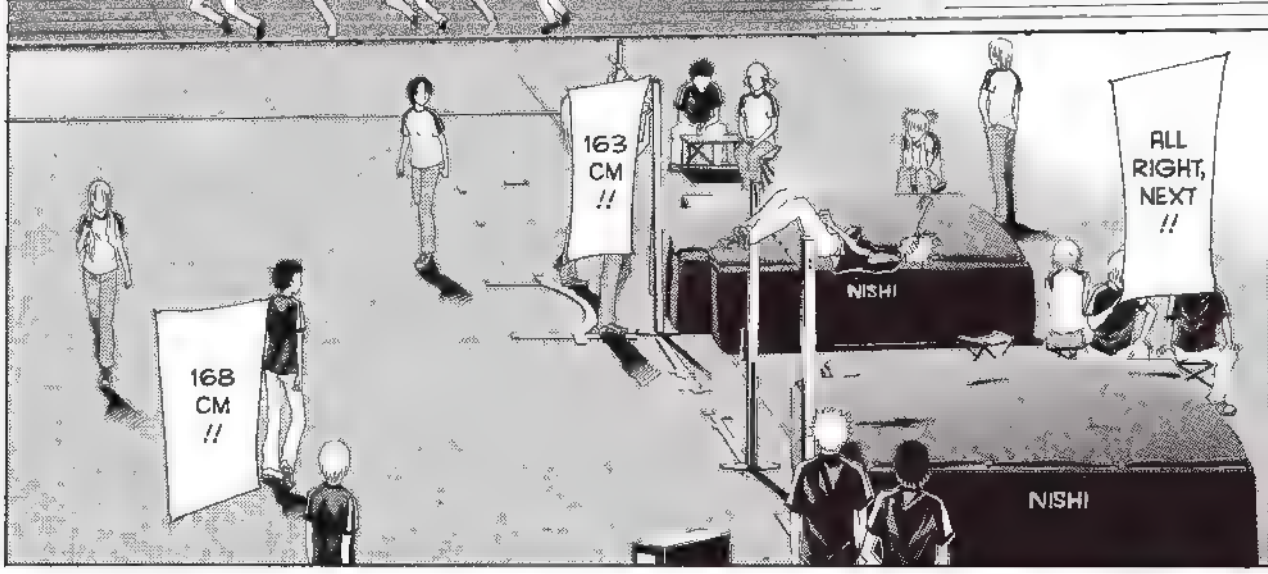


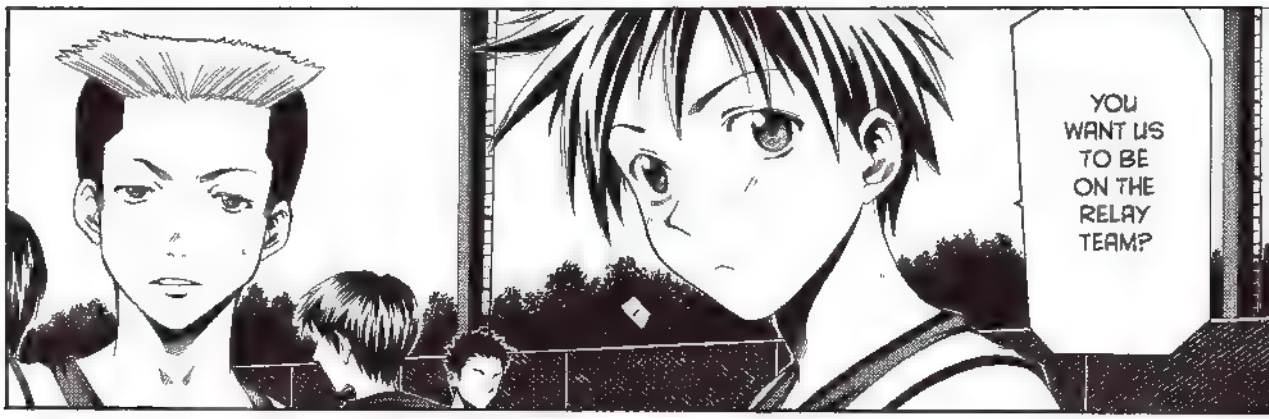
I'D LIKE TO TELL AKITSUKI-KUN HOW I FEEL ABOUT HIM AGAIN...

SHIVER
SHE BROKE KENJI KOBAYAKAWA'S HEART TWICE BUT NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW.

#55 ENCOURAGEMENT

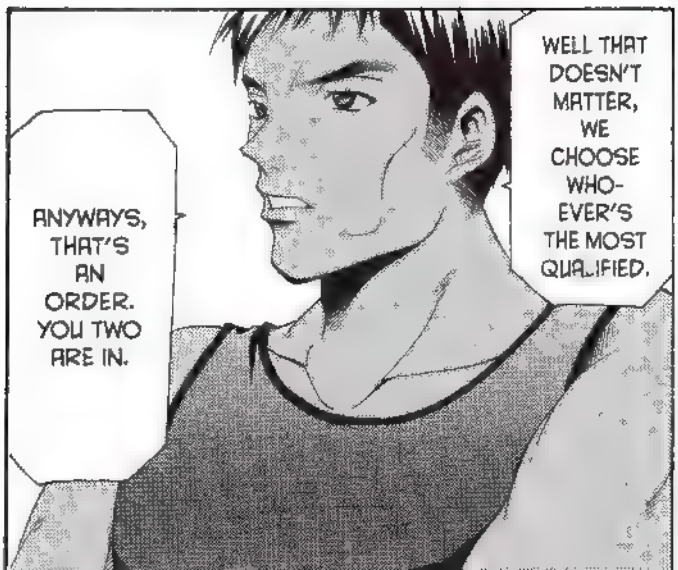
SUZUKA


163 CM !!
ALL RIGHT, NEXT !!
NISHI
168 CM !!
NISHI


YOU WANT US TO BE ON THE RELAY TEAM?

...BUT I JUST JOINED THE TEAM.
WHAT? SERIOUSLY ?!

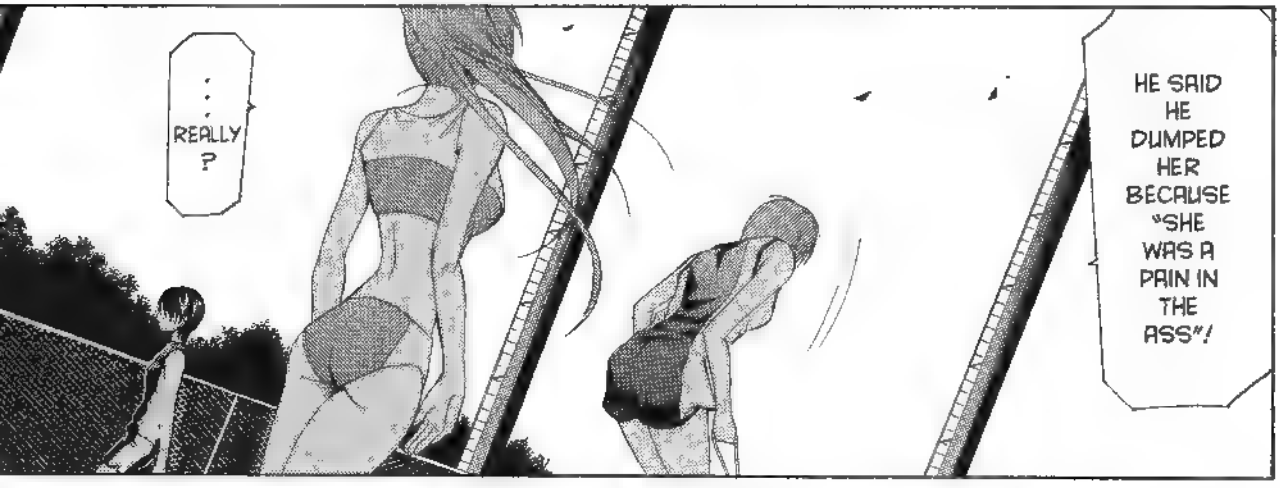
YEAH, YOU GUYS WERE THE TWO FASTEST IN TODAY'S PRELIMI-NARY 100 METER RACE.
I REALLY WANT YOU TWO TO BE IN THE RACE.


WELL THAT DOESN'T MATTER, WE CHOOSE WHO-EVER'S THE MOST QUALIFIED.
ANYWAYS, THAT'S AN ORDER. YOU TWO ARE IN.

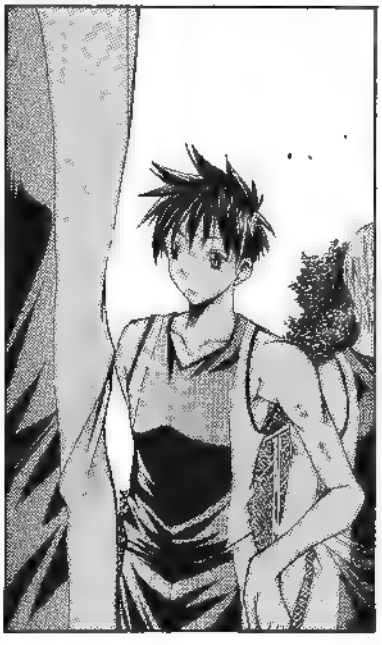
HUH……?
..!
THAT'S REALLY GREAT, AK TSUKI-KUN.
YES, SIR!!
I'LL DO MY BEST!!
……
GOOD LUCK!
Y-YEAH, GOOD LUCK TO YOU, TOO...
I-I'M GONNA HANG N THERE, TOO, SAKURA!!
TH-THANKS..
OKAY, YOU GUYS NEED TO STAY FOR ANOTHER TRAINING SESSION AFTER PRACTICE IS OVER.
ALL RIGHT.
HUH……

THE RELAY TEAM?
YEAH! AKITSUKI WAS SELECTED. ISN'T THAT AWESOME?
HE'S BEEN SO DE-PRESSED SINCE HE BROKE UP WITH SAKURAI-SAN.
I WAS KINDA WORRIED, YOU KNOW.
WHAT'S WRONG, SUZUKA? ARE YOU TWO FIGHTING AGAIN?
NO, IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT.
BUT...
I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT HIM.
FWICK

I JUST CAN'T STAND CLUELESS GUYS LIKE HIM.
THAT'S ALL.
CLUELESS. WELL, I KNOW HE BROKE UP WITH SAKURAI-SAN.
YANK
BUT IT PROBABLY WASN'T ALL HIS FAULT...

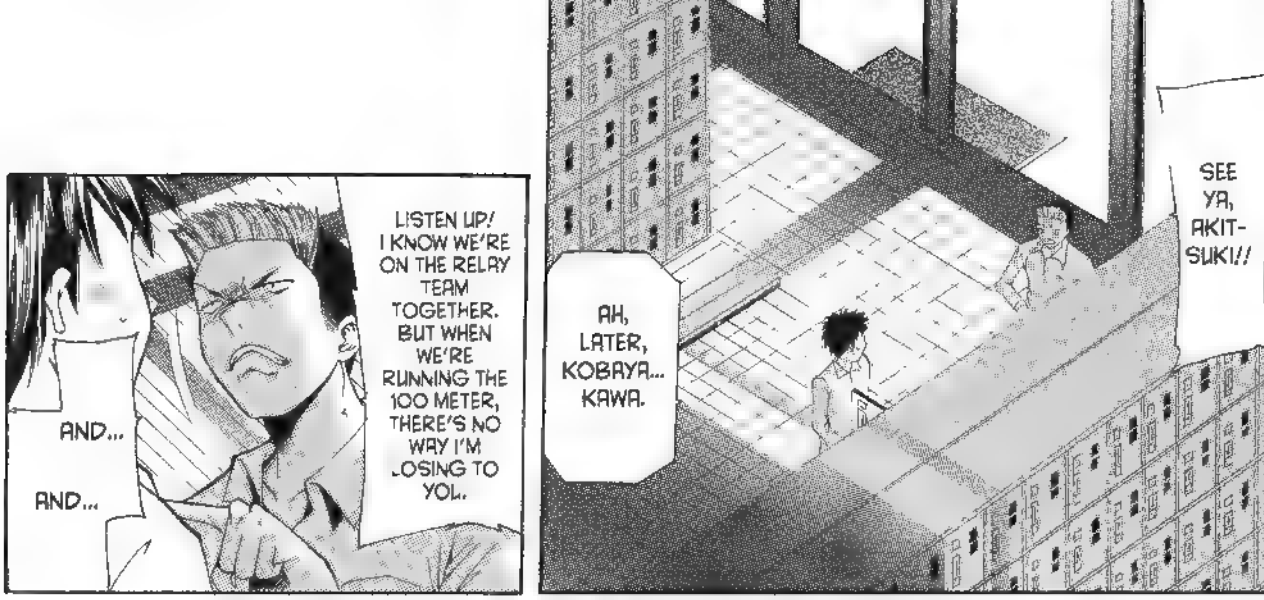

HE SAID HE DUMPED HER BECAUSE "SHE WAS A PAIN IN THE ASS"!
REALLY?

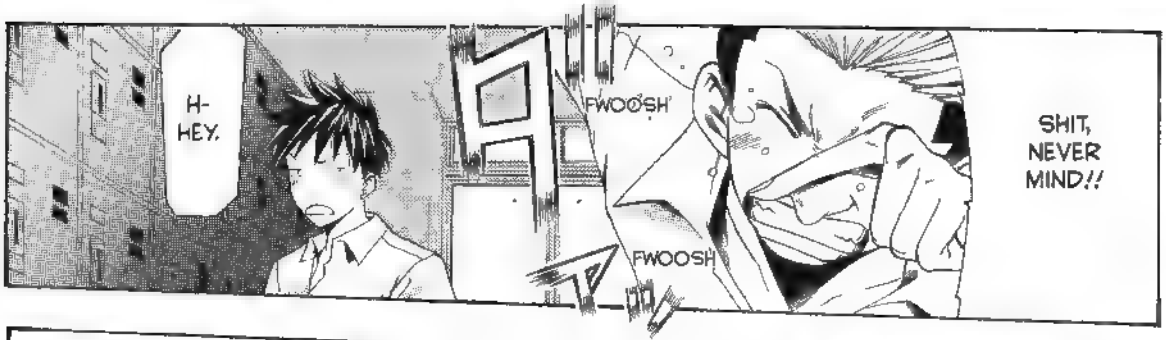
AKIT-SUKI SAID THAT...?



REALLY? NO WAY...

W-WHAT THE HELL....? DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?
WHY DON'T YOU GO ASK HIM YOUR-SELF?

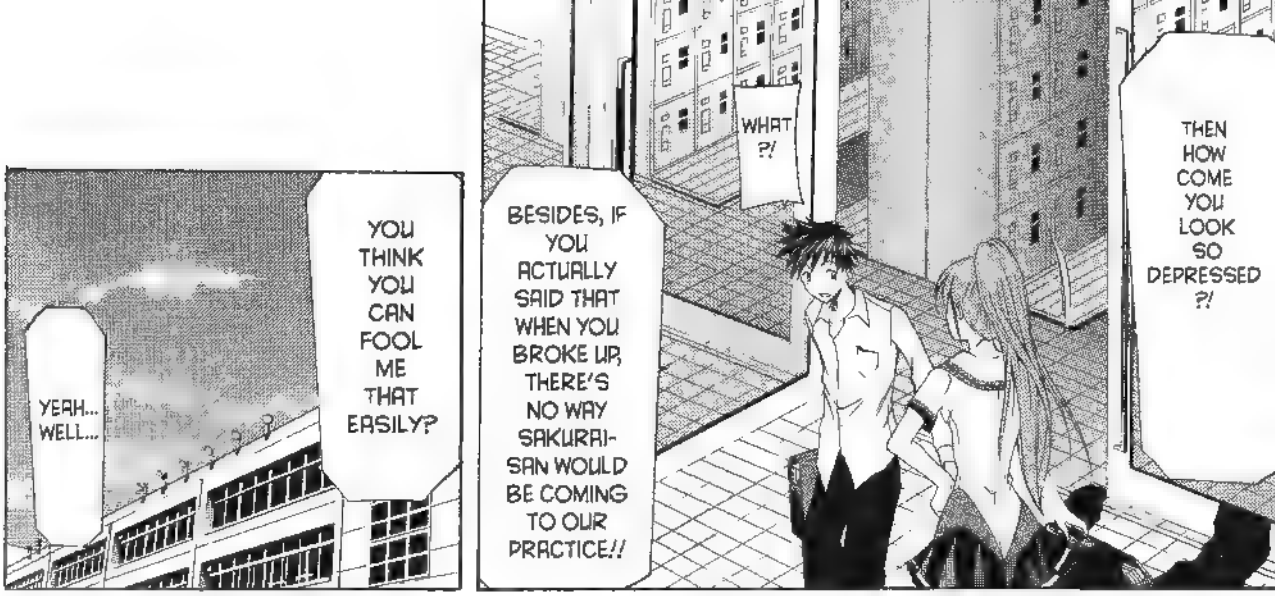

SEE YA, AKIT-SUKI!!
AH, LATER, KOBAYA... KAWA.
LISTEN UP! I KNOW WE'RE ON THE RELAY TEAM TOGETHER. BUT WHEN WE'RE RUNNING THE 100 METER, THERE'S NO WAY I'M LOSING TO YOU.
AND...
AND...


H-HEY.
FWOOSH
FWOOSH
SHIT, NEVER MIND!!

...?
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIM?
CLANK
CAN I TALK TO YOU FOR A SEC?!
JESUS!! YOU SCARED THE SHIT OUTTA ME!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE SO LATE, HASHI-BA?
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU, AKIT-SUKI!!
...WHAT?
IS IT TRUE?
YOU BROKE UP WITH SAKURAI-SAN, BECAUSE SHE WAS 'A PAIN IN THE ASS'?!

OH, NOT THIS AGAIN...
ASAHINA TOLD YOU THAT, HUH?
JUST ANSWER THE QUESTION !!
.....
YEAH, IT'S TRUE... YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
.....
GLARE
...WHAT?
YOU'RE FULL OF IT!


THEN HOW COME YOU LOOK SO DEPRESSED ?!
WHAT ?!
BESIDES, IF YOU ACTUALLY SAID THAT WHEN YOU BROKE UP, THERE'S NO WAY SAKURAI-SAN WOULD BE COMING TO OUR PRACTICE!!
YOU THINK YOU CAN FOOL ME THAT EASILY?
YEAH... WELL...

I'M NOT GOING HOME UNTIL...
...YOU TELL ME THE REAL REASON.

SAKURAI SAID SHE THOUGHT
...THAT I STILL LIKED ASAHINA.
THEN WE STARTED FIGHTING.

WHAT?
YOU MEAN, YOU STILL LIKE SUZUKA ?!

...NO... I DON'T THINK I DO.
BUT, I WAS SO BUSY TRYING TO ACT LIKE A GOOD BOYFRIEND THAT I DIDN'T EVEN STOP TO THINK ABOUT HOW HONOKA-CHAN FELT. I WAS REALLY SELFISH.
I GUESS...
...TO HER, THAT MADE IT SEEM LIKE I STILL LIKED ASAHINA.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL...
SUZUKA THAT?
WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO SAY TO HER? "YOU'RE THE REASON I BROKE UP WITH MY GIRL-FRIEND"?
OH...
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT...
ANYWAYS, DON'T MENTION ANY OF THIS TO ASAHINA.
SHE ALREADY FEELS BAD ENOUGH AS IT IS...
AKITSUKI.

I WON'T TELL HER.
ALL RIGHT..
UM...
WELL, I'M GONNA HEAD HOME.
LET'S GET SOMETHING TO EAT ON THE WAY HOME!!
YOU MUST BE PRETTY HUNGRY AFTER ALL THAT PRACTICE, RIGHT?!
HEY, WAIT!
W-WHAT?
YANAZE-TEI OKONOMIYAKI, MONJA
HUH...?
YANAZE
TEPPANYAKI, OKONOMIYAKI

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO TRY THIS PLACE!!
BUT, I DON'T KNOW, IT JUST D DN'T SEEM L KE THE KIND OF PLACE A GIRL COULD GO BY HERSELF.
.....
SO, THAT'S WHY YOU DRAGGED ME IN HERE.
YOU COULD HAVE JUST COME WITH ASAH NA.
HEY, LOOK, I THINK IT'S READY.
CAN I TURN IT OVER?!
FL P
WATCH IT! YOU IDIOT!
LOOK! IT'S NOT EVEN COOKED YET!!
NO... YOU'RE GONNA BURN IT.
IF YOU KEEP FLIPPING IT OVER AND OVER LIKE THAT, ALL THE AIR'LL SEEP OUT AND IT WON'T BE FLUFFY!!
SO DON'T TOUCH IT ANYMORE !!
YOU'RE SO MEAN.

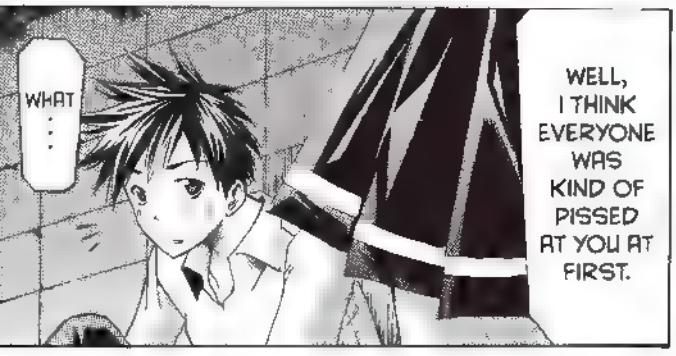
FLIP
QUIT IT, STUPID !!
OH, COME ON, LET ME FLIP IT.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M A PRO!!
OKONOMIYAKI
YOU'RE FROM HIRO-SHIMA, SO WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT?!
THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE KANSAI-STYLE, YOU KNOW?!
SHUT UP. DON'T BE SUCH AN OKO-NOMIYAKI SNOB!!
GRAB
YOU'RE GONNA RUIN IT!!
YOU'VE GOT TO PUT SOME SAUCE ON IT FIRST!!
FWICK
LOOK, IT'S PERFECT!
PLUP
I WANT SOME AONORI ON MINE!!
AH...
PLOOSH

HEY!!
I SAID "HEY!" TURN AROUND, AKITSUKI! DO I STILL HAVE ANOR STUCK IN MY TEETH?
ALL THE WAITERS WERE TOTALLY GLARING AT US!!
I HAVE NEVER HAD SUCH GROSS OKONOMI-YAKI!
IT'S NO USE DWELLING ON THE PAST, AKITSUKI!
...WHAT?
HEY...
WHAT?

HASHIBA...
HAS SHE JUST BEEN TRYING TO CHEER ME UP THIS WHOLE TIME? IS THAT WHY SHE ASKED ME TO...
YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MUCH THAT CAN CHEER YOU UP.
WHENEVER I'M WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING, I JUST EAT TO MY HEART'S CONTENT!
I-I WASN'T WORRIED...
I KNOW HONOKA-CHAN'S ALREADY MOVED ON, AND HERE I AM...
SORRY...IF I MADE YOU ALL WORRIED...
FWUP
BUT IT'S SO WEIRD...
I MEAN, THE WHOLE REASON I JOINED THE TRACK TEAM IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS SO I COULD BE NEAR ASAHINA.
Y-YEAH...
I MEAN, YOU MADE IT ON TO THE RELAY TEAM, RIGHT?
YOU JUST NEED TO LIGHTEN UP, AKITSUKI!

NOW THAT ASAHINA HATES MY GUTS...
WHAT'S THE POINT OF ME STAYING ON THE TEAM?

WELL...
I MEAN, I FEEL BAD FOR ALL THE PEOPLE ON THE TEAM WHO ARE TRYING SO HARD, SO...
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE...


WHAT...
WELL, I THINK EVERYONE WAS KIND OF PISSED AT YOU AT FIRST.

.....

STAB
STAB
YOU JOINED THE TEAM RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEASON, AND AT FIRST YOU COULD HARDLY EVEN KEEP UP WITH PRACTICE.
AND NOW SUDDENLY YOU'VE BEEN CHOSEN FOR THE BIG COMPETI-TION.

BUT... YOU KNOW WHAT'S WEIRD, AKITSUKI...?
WHAT...?
WHENEVER I WATCH YOU, I JUST GET THE FEELING, THAT YOU'RE GONNA DO SOMETHING... SOMETHING BIG.
AND I GET THE FEELING THAT EVERYONE ELSE ON THE TEAM FEELS THE SAME WAY.
YOU...
...THINK SO?

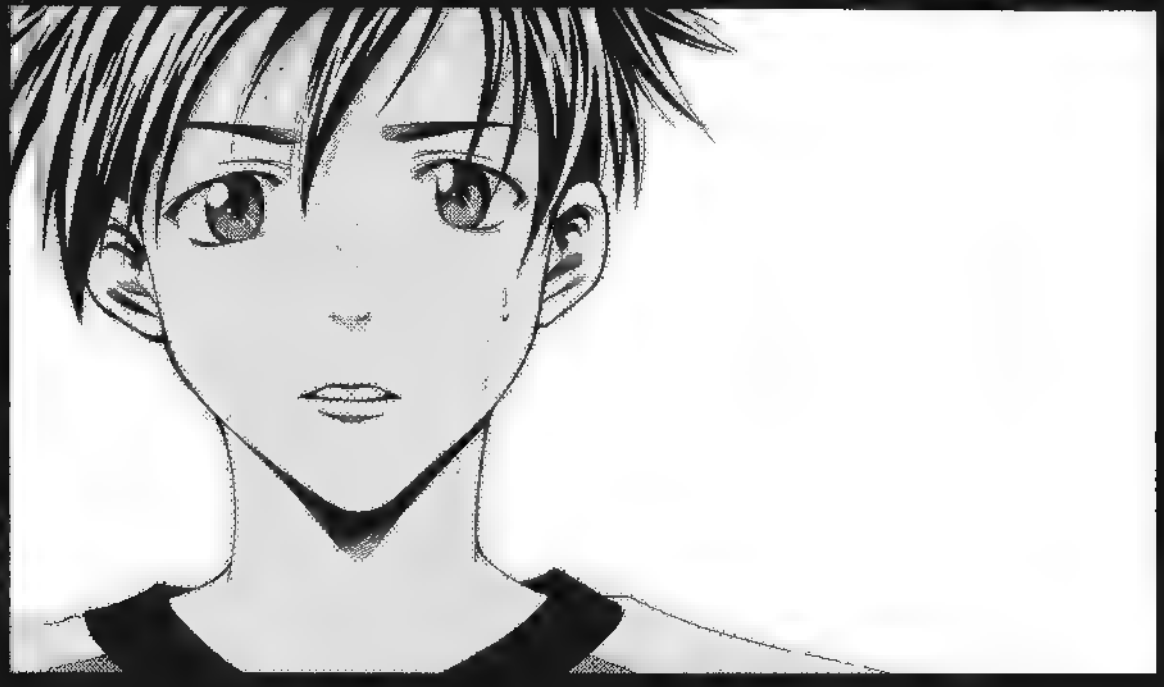
Y-YEAH...
THAT'S THE REASON YOU'RE STAYING ON THE TEAM.
DAMN RIGHT I DO! AND YOU'D BETTER PROVE US RIGHT!
GOT IT? NOW GET UP!
YOU CAN'T SIT AROUND ON YOUR ASS FOREVER!!
YANK
YOU REALLY LIKE TO STICK YOUR NOSE INTO OTHER PEOPLE'S BUSINESS DON'T YOU, HASHIBA?
SH-SHUT UP...

AL-
RIGHT
GOOD

STOMP
STEP
STEP
ALL RIGHT...
I'M JUST GONNA FOCUS ON WINNING THIS RACE.
UM...
UHHH...
SUZUKA

SUZUKA

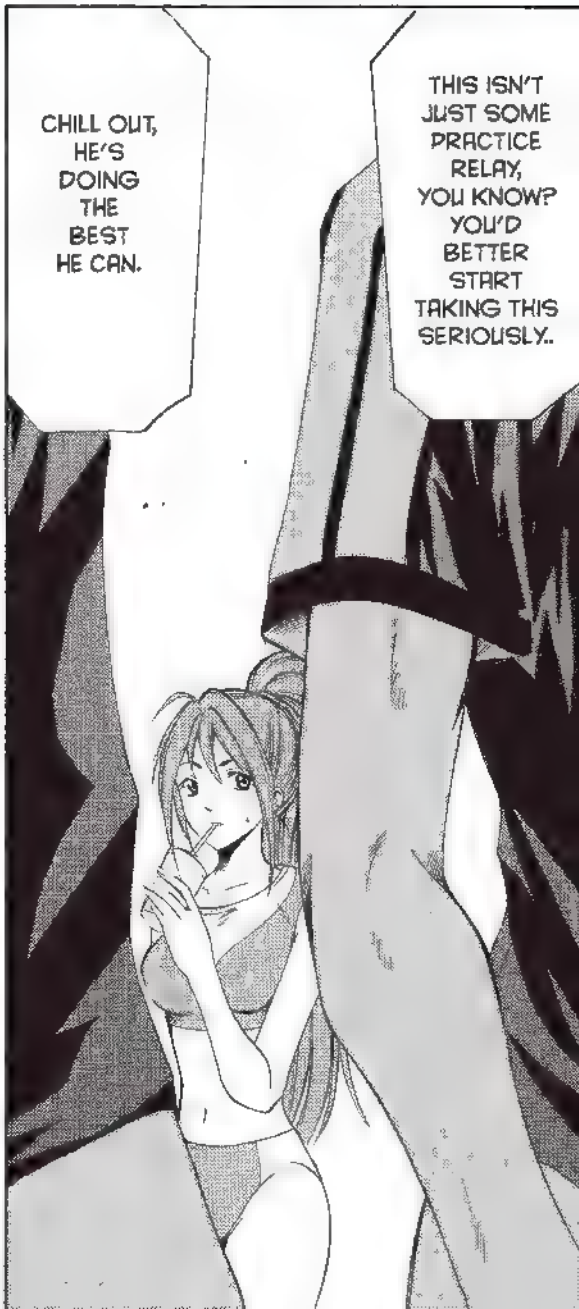
#56 TRUE INTENTION



OKAY, I KNEW SHE HATED ME...
...BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT HAD GOTTEN THIS BAD.
STEP
STEP
KALANK
KALANK
SORRY
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, AKITSUKI? YOU KEEP DROPPING THE BATON.
OOPS...
SHIT...
HEY, MIYA-MOTO, I KNOW HE'S FAST...
BUT HE CAN'T HANDLE A BATON FOR SHIT.
GIVE HIM A BREAK, SASAKI, AKITSUKI HARDLY HAS ANY EXPERIENCE WITH THIS STUFF.

YEAH, WELL EVERY-BODY STARTS OUT THAT WAY...
TSSS
BUT IF YOU ASK ME, HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S NOT EVEN TRYING.

ALL RIGHT!
.....

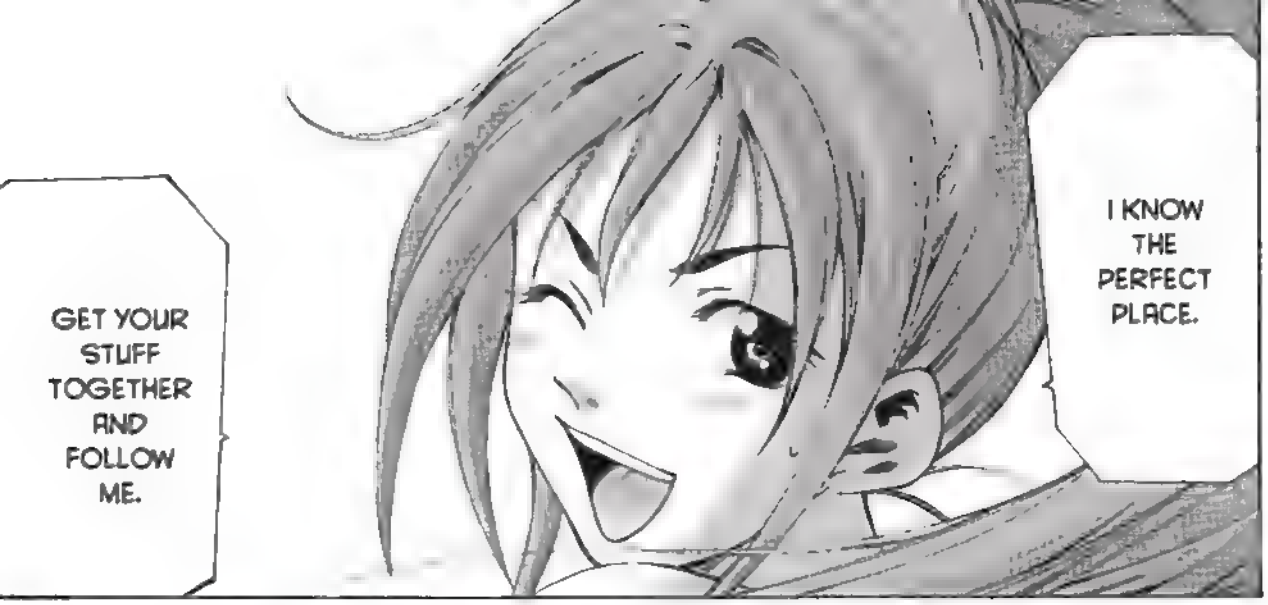

THIS ISN'T JUST SOME PRACTICE RELAY, YOU KNOW? YOU'D BETTER START TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY..
CHILL OUT, HE'S DOING THE BEST HE CAN.

SASAKI-SENPAI REALLY HATES YOU.
SHUT UP.

.....
AKIT-SUKI.

I TOLD MYSELF I WAS REALLY GONNA STICK IT OUT AND DO MY BEST, AND NOW...
I SUCK.
DID YOU JUST FINISH RELAY PRACTICE ?
AKIT-SUKI!
HASHIBA... YOU'RE STILL HERE?
UH, YEAH . . .
SO, HOW DID PRACTICE GO?

I KEPT DROPPING THE BATON AND SLOWING EVERYONE DOWN.
NOW THEY'RE ALL PISSED AT ME.
AND I CAN'T PRACTICE FOR THE RELAY ON MY OWN YOU KNOW..
O-OH
FEEL LIKE SUCH AN ASS HOLE
.....
YOU KNOW...
IF YOU WANT, CAN HELP YOU PRACTICE RIGHT NOW.
I MEAN, WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD YOU TO STICK WITH IT!!
WHO?
WELL... THAT'S REALLY NICE OF YOU.
BUT I THINK THE FIELD IS CLOSED SO...
DON'T WORRY!


I KNOW THE PERFECT PLACE.
GET YOUR STUFF TOGETHER AND FOLLOW ME.

IS THIS A . . .

. . . PARK ?

FLUP
YEP. IT'S HUGE, ISN'T IT?

MIKASHIMO-OKA PARK NORTH

W-WHY THE HELL ARE YOU TAKING YOUR CLOTHES OFF?!
THERE ARE LOADS OF STRAIGHT AWAYS THAT'LL BE PERFECT FOR PRACTICE
HEY, GOT MY TRAIN
I WE'RE GOING PRACTICE WE MIGHT AS WELL DO IT RIGHT AND WEAR OUR UNIFORMS
UNIFORM ON UNDER NEATH

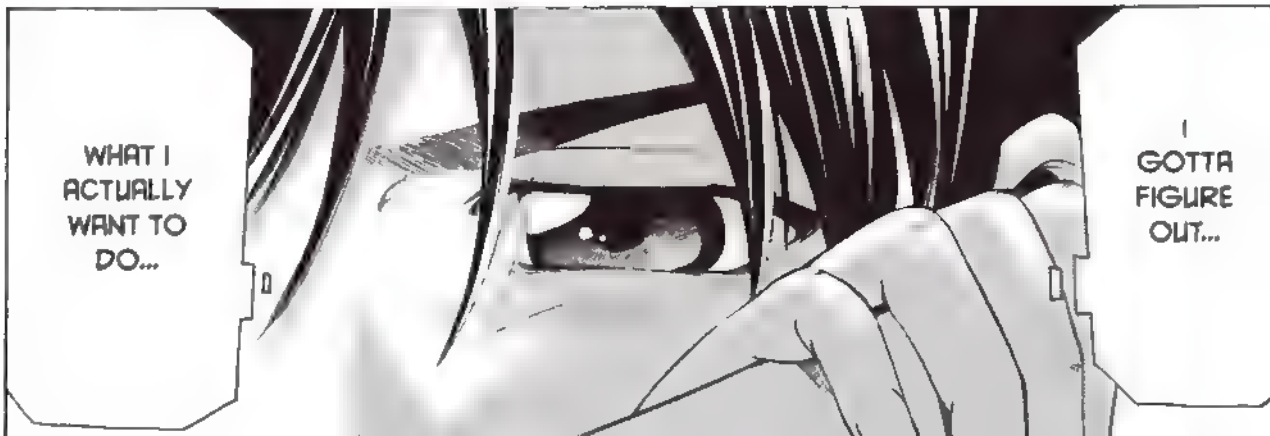
OKAY!
LET'S TRY IT ONE MORE TIME SO YOU DON'T FORGET WHAT YOU LEARNED!
ALL RIGHT, YOU'RE GETTING THERE!
12
SEIKO
ALL RIGHT! THIS TIME I'M GONNA DO IT RIGHT.
FWOOSH

SHOCK
YOU SUCK...
SHIT...
KALANK
KALANK
S-SORRY...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, AKITSUK? YOU GOTTA GET THE TIMING RIGHT!
THOUGHT YOU FINALLY HAD IT

"HOT'S ENOUGH FOR TODAY."
SWISH
.....
WAIT HERE.
I'M GONNA GO GET SOME DRINKS.
.....
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING

I ALWAYS JUST GO WITH THE FLOW AND DO WHATEVER PEOPLE TELL ME TO.
I TELL THEM WHAT THEY WANNA HEAR...
I TRIED TO ACT LIKE THE PERFECT BOYFRIEND WHEN I WAS WITH HONOKA-CHAN...
I ACTED LIKE A JERK SO ASAHINA WOULD HATE ME.
AND I STAYED ON THE TRACK TEAM JUST CAUSE HASHIBA TOLD ME TO.

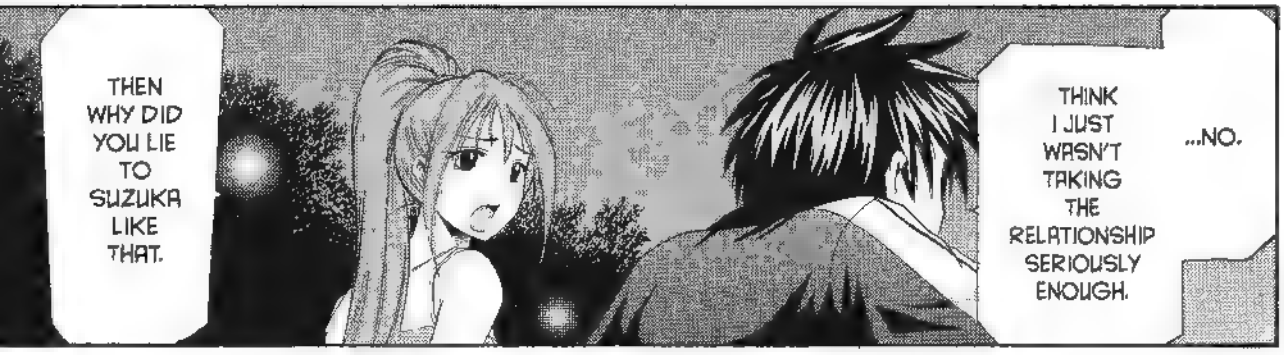
AND ALL I EVER END UP DOING IS PISSING EVERYONE OFF OR GETTING THEM ALL WORRIED OR MAKING THEM CRY
BL DO EVERY-THING IN A TOTALLY HALF-ASSED WAY.


WHAT I ACTUALLY WANT TO DO...
I GOTTA FIGURE OUT...

YOU'RE DEEP IN THOUGHT AGAIN, EH...
WHOA, THAT'S COLD!!
PLLP
I-IT'S NOT THAT!
WHAT NOW? ARE YOU DEPRESSED CAUSE THE SENPAI GUYS ARE SO HARD ON YOU?
.....
DSHEW
THEN WHAT IS IT?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS.
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT'S BUGGING ME.
HUH?

SORRY, THAT DOESN'T EVEN MAKE SENSE.
WHAT THE HELL AM I TALKING ABOUT...
YOU'RE THINKING "GOD, I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT," RIGHT?
I KNOW WHAT IT IS....
YOU REGRET WHAT YOU SAID TO SUZUKA, RIGHT...?
WHAT....?
NO, THAT'S NOT...
.....

DID YOU TWO REALLY BREAK UP BECAUSE OF SUZUKA?
UMM...
SO...


THEN WHY DID YOU LIE TO SUZUKA LIKE THAT.
THINK I JUST WASN'T TAKING THE RELATIONSHIP SERIOUSLY ENOUGH.
...NO.

BUT I CAN'T TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID, CAN I?
OKAY! I KNOW!

SO I WAS RIGHT. YOU DO REGRET IT.

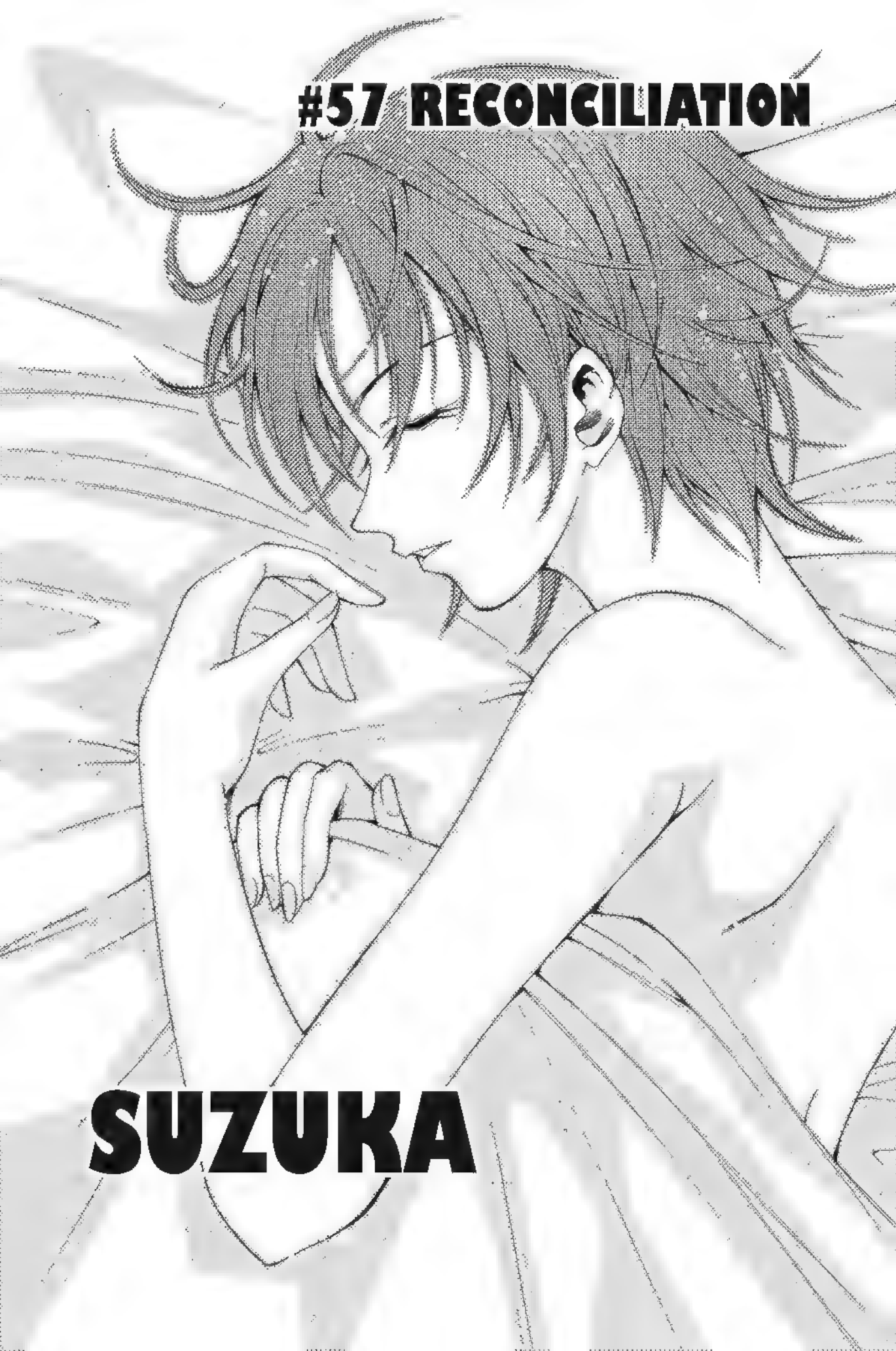
WHAT...?
I'LL TELL HER YOU TOLD ME NOT TO TELL HER.
THEN WHY DON'T YOU LET ME TALK TO SUZUKA FOR YOU?

...YOU SAID YOU BROKE UP WITH HER BECAUSE "SHE WAS A PAIN IN THE ASS"... DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A MEAN THING TO SAY ABOUT SAKURAI?
AND WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU MAKE UP SOMETHING LIKE THAT JUST TO PISS OFF SUZUKA? I CAN'T BELIEVE...

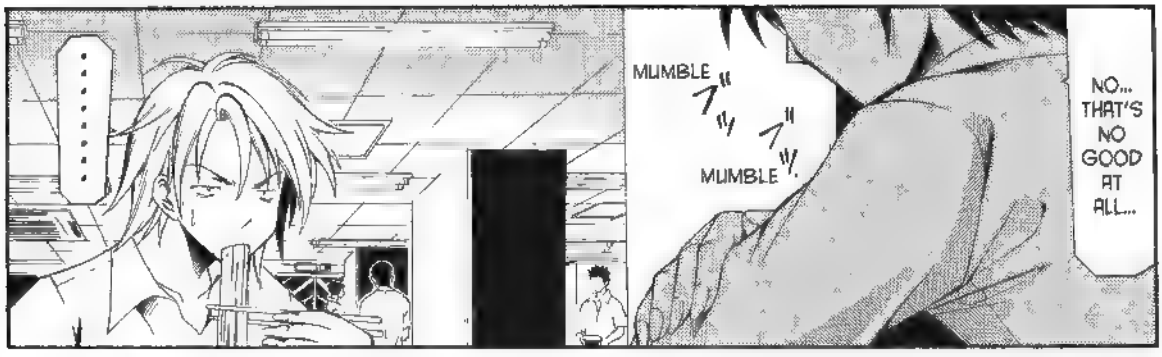
I'M SURE SHE'LL UNDER-STAND IF YOU JUST LET ME EXPLAIN.
AND THIS CONVER-SATION CAN BE OUR LITTLE SECRET. I WON'T TELL HER ABOUT IT.
WELL.... I GUESS IF YOU DID THAT...
.....
OKAY THEN I'LL TALK TO HER TOMOR-ROW.
.....
NO! WAIT A SEC!!
W-WHAT IS IT NOW?
I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT... I'LL TELL HER MYSELF.
HUH? BUT THEN
コン
PLUNK
IT'LL SOUND LIKE A TOTAL LIE, AND...
IT'LL PROBABLY JUST SEEM LIKE ANOTHER EXCUSE TO HER. I'LL END UP LOOKING LIKE EVEN MORE OF AN IDIOT.

THIS TOTALLY SUCKS.
I LIED TO ASAHINA AND NOW I'M GONNA FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!!
A-AKITSUKI...
. . . WHAT ?
OKAY, FINE. DO WHATEVER YOU WANT. THIS IS GETTING RIDICU-LOUS.
. . . . . .
. . . WELL.
I'LL PROBABLY END UP REGRET-TING THIS, BUT...
YOU'RE ALWAYS WORRIED ABOUT THIS OR THAT, AND HALF THE TIME I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALK-ING ABOUT...

ISN'T THAT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT?
BUT WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, YOU JUST WANT TO MAKE UP WITH SUZUKA.
AH, SHE'S RIGHT...
THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL...
WELL, I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT I WANT..
BUT ONE THING'S FOR SURE I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF HER HATING ME
YEAH, YEAH.

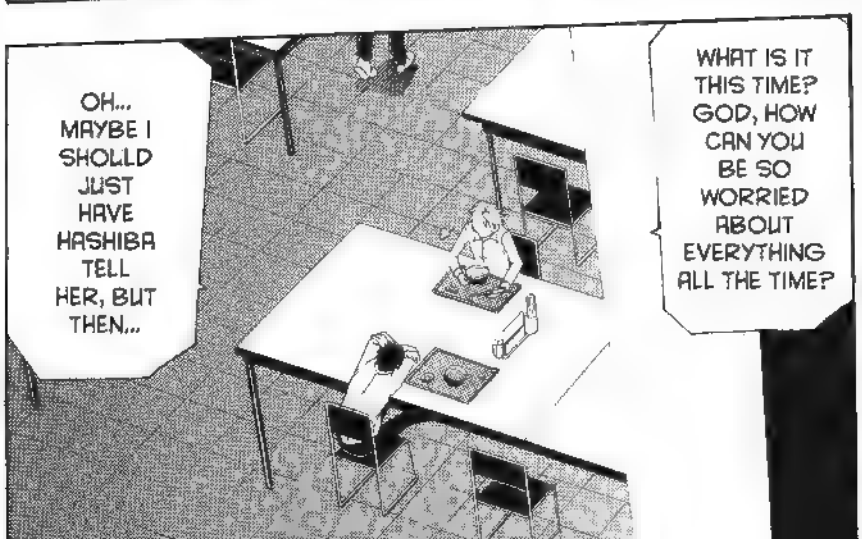

#57 RECONCILIATION
SUZUKA

WELL...
IF I SAY THIS...
SHE'LL PROBABLY SAY THAT AND
THEN I'LL BE...


.....
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
NO... THAT'S NO GOOD AT ALL...

FWUP
DAMN IT!! NO MATTER WHAT I SAY IT'S GONNA END UP A DISASTER!!

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT? YOUR UDON'S GETTING COLD, MAN.
SLURP

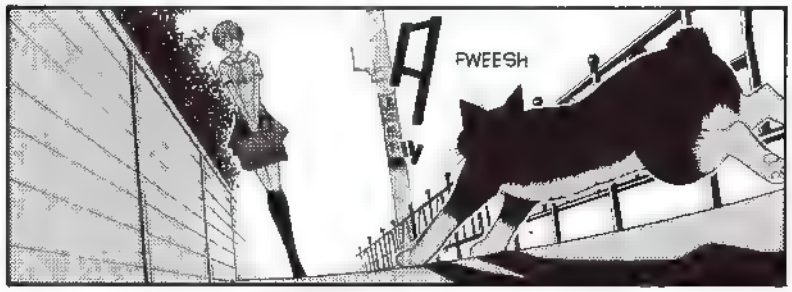

OH... MAYBE I SHOULD JUST HAVE HASHIBA TELL HER, BUT THEN...
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME? GOD, HOW CAN YOU BE SO WORRIED ABOUT EVERYTHING ALL THE TIME?

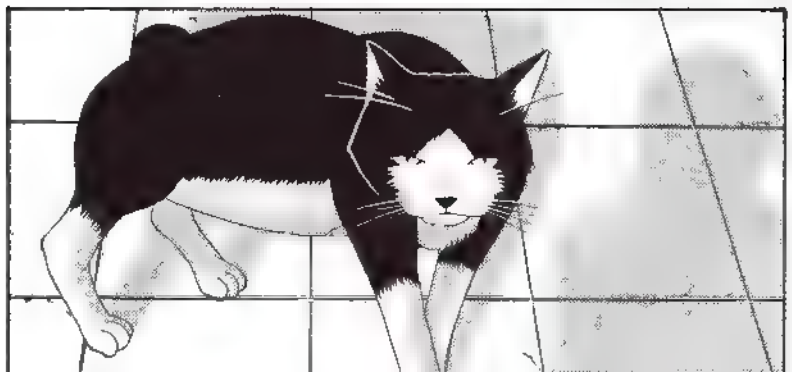
HASHI-BA . . .
I TOLD YOU I'D DO IT FOR YOU, IF YOU—
WHAT? YOU STILL HAVEN'T TALKED TO HER YET?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TWO TALKING ABOUT?
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSI-NESS! JUST EAT YOUR FREAKIN' NOODLES.
HUH . . . ?
GEEZ, YAMATO. EVER HEARD OF MORALS ? TRYING TO GET WITH YOUR FRIENDS . . .
OH, I GET IT, YOU ACT LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO COMFORT POOR, BROKENHEARTED YAMATO, BUT REALLY YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO GET HIS ATTENTION, RIGHT?
WHAT ?!
KOUGEN BUTTER
DON'T BE AN IDIOT!!
YANK
YANK
WHAT? I NEVER TRY TO HOOK UP WITH MY FRIENDS.
SHUT UP, PERVERT. YAMATO'S NOT L KE THAT. SOUNDS MORE LIKE SOMETHING YOU WOULD DO!

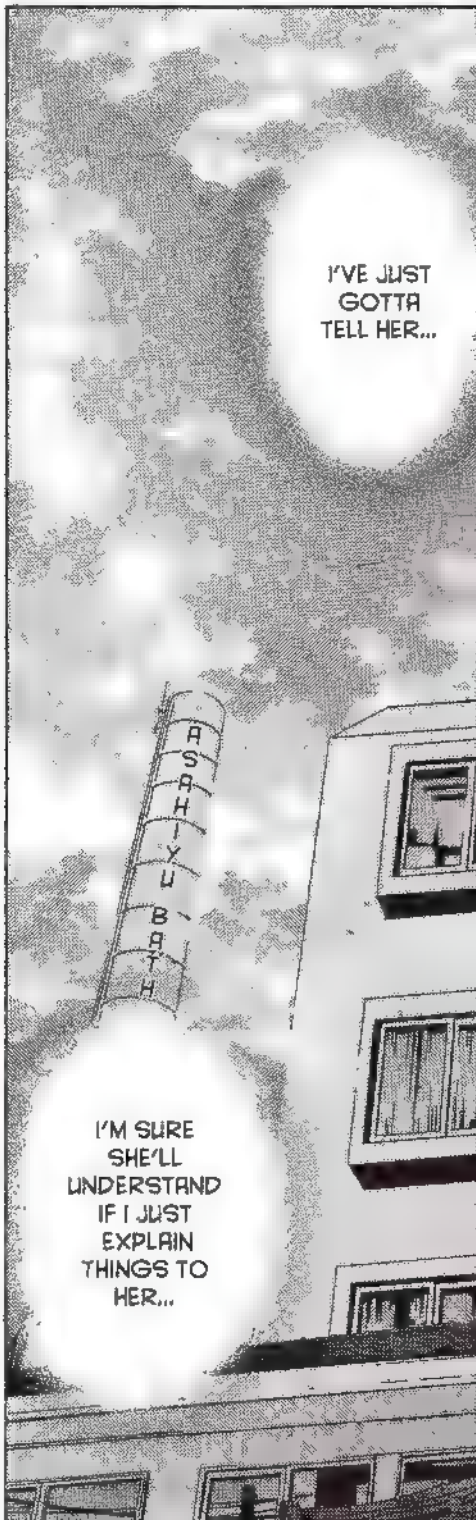
WORRYING ABOUT IT ISN'T GONNA DO ME ANY GOOD...

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME!!
EXCUSE ME?! OH, YOU ARE SO FULL OF SHIT!!

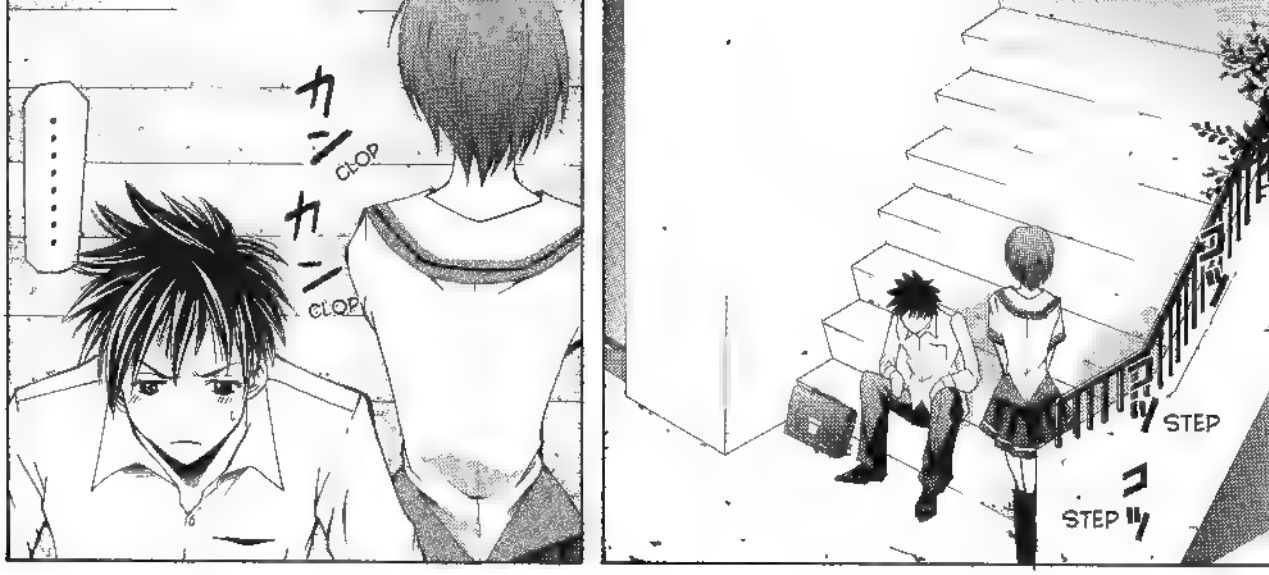
STEP
STEP


FWEESH




I'VE JUST GOTTA TELL HER...
ASAHIYU BATH
I'M SURE SHE'LL UNDERSTAND IF I JUST EXPLAIN THINGS TO HER...

DID YOU JUST GET HOME?
GORO CHAN...
PLONK
AH...
FWESH
.....


カン
CLOP
カン
CLOP
STEP
STEP

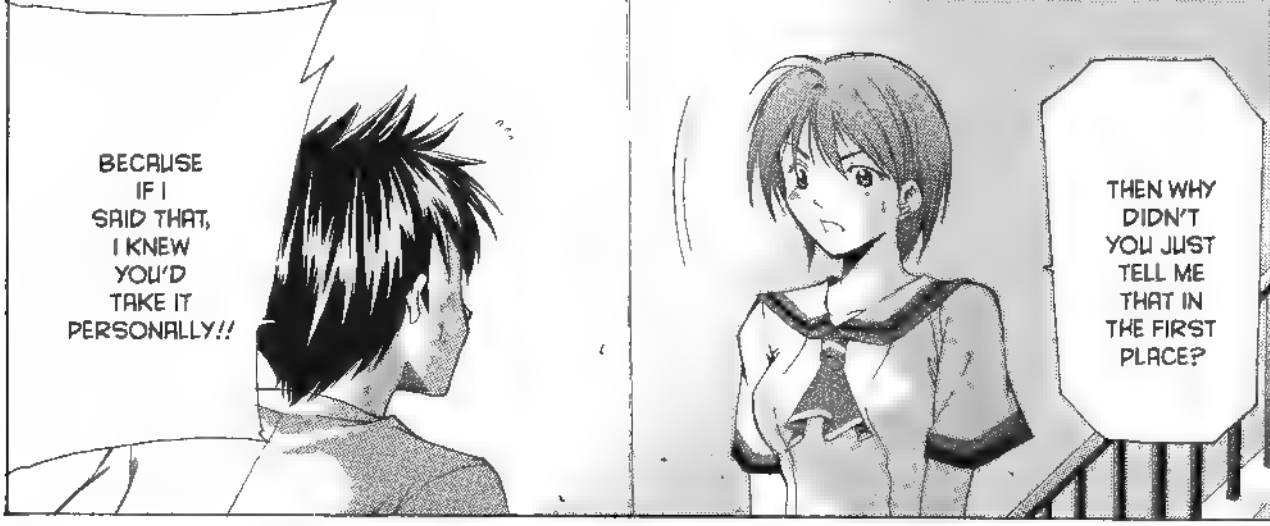
I-
I
WANNA
APLOG ZE
...

...REMEMBER
YOU
DOING
ANYTHING
THAT
REQUIRES
AN
APOLOGY...
I
DON'T
...

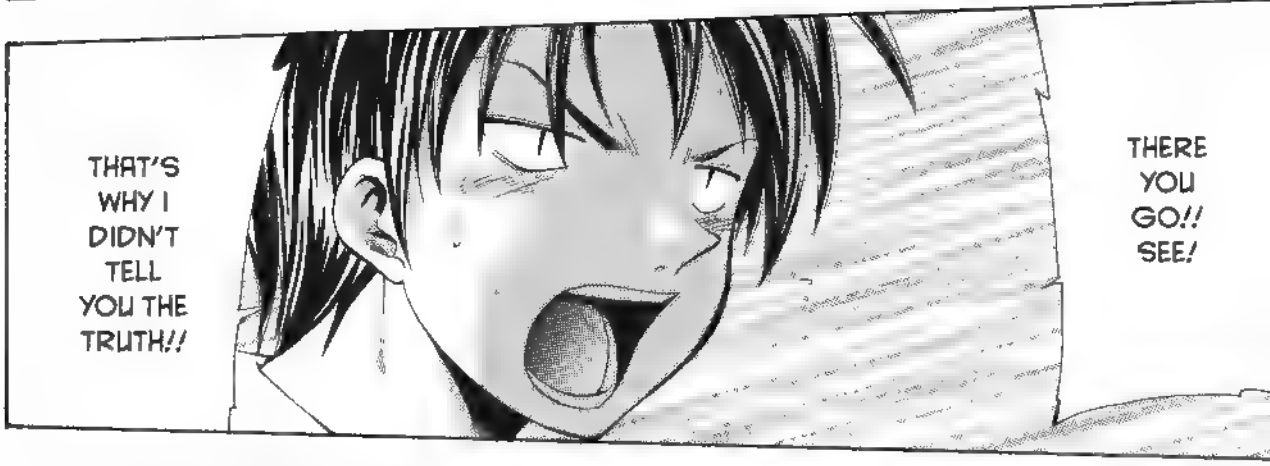
WAIT, HOLD ON!
Y YOU KNOW THE REASON I GAVE YOU FOR BREAKING UP W*H HONOKA CHAN
WELL... THAT WAS... A LIE...
WHAT?
WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS NOW?
JUST LISTEN, OKAY

"THE TRUTH IS WE WERE HAVING A LOT OF PROBLEMS AND WE GOT IN A BIG FIGHT.
WE JUST REALIZED THAT WE DIDN'T REALLY GET ALONG... SO THAT'S WHY WE...
I MEAN IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE SOME THING YOU'D NEED TO HIDE FROM ME.
WELL...
EVEN IF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS TRUE...
THEN WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LIE TO ME LIKE THAT?

HONOKA SAID SHE THOUGHT I STILL LIKED YOU...
AND THAT'S HOW THE FIGHT STARTED.
WHAT...?
B-BUT THAT WASN'T THE REAL PROBLEM...
THAT WAS JUST WHAT TRIGGERED THE FIGHT...
THE REAL REASON WE BROKE UP WAS THAT I WASN'T TAKING THE RELATIONSHIP SERIOUSLY ENOUGH.


BECAUSE IF I SAID THAT, I KNEW YOU'D TAKE IT PERSONALLY!!
THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST TELL ME THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE?

YOU TELL ME THAT I'M THE ONE WHO CAUSED YOUR BREAKUP.. HOW THE HELL DO YOU EXPECT ME TO FEEL?
OF COURSE I WOULD.


THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T TELL YOU THE TRUTH!!
THERE YOU GO!! SEE!

WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT?
TH-THEN WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS NOW!?

BECAUSE
B-
I HATE THIS!!
I HATE FIGHTING WITH YOU!!
...HUHP
.....

NO MATTER WHAT I'M DOING, EVEN WHEN I'M AT PRACTICE . . .
THAT'S ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT! I CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON ANYTHING.
TH-THAT'S YOUR OWN PROBLEM . . .
I KNOW.
BUT I JUST CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF YOU HATING ME ANYMORE...
I MEAN, YOU STARTED THE WHOLE THING.
. . . . . .

H-
HEY.
THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE...
WHAT...
FW SH
WHAT'S THAT SUP-POSED TO MEAN?
CLOP
CLOP
ASAHINA !!
ASAHINA !!
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP

CREAK
301
YAMATO AKITSUKI
THUNK
THAT DIDN'T GO OVER WELL...
OF COURSE I DIDN'T...
WHO AM I TRYING TO KID...ALL I DID WAS GIVE HER A BUNCH OF LAME EXCUSES TO COVER MY OWN ASS.
AHHH... I SHOULD'VE JUST ASKED HASHIBA TO DO IT.
WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO LET MY PRIDE GET IN THE WAY?

I DON'T EVEN GIVE A SHIT ANY-MORE.
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST QUIT THE TRACK TEAM...
AHHH...
BUZZ
BUZZ
FWUP
OH GREAT...
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
HELLO ?!
BEEP
GRR
SHOES
NCE

TRY ANSWERING THE PHONE A LITTLE SOONER NEXT TIME! GEEZ!
. . . . !?
STUMBLE
A-ASAHI . . .
OUCH . . . !!
OH SHIT !!
CRASH
. . . . . .
NOTHING REALLY . . .
S-SORRY. I DROPPED MY PHONE.
W-WHAT IS IT?
HUH . . . ?

I DON'T HATE YOU, OKAY !!
SO JUST KEEP WORKING ON TRAINING FOR THE RELAY !!
I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO BLAME EVERYTHING ON ME AND OUR FIGHT IF YOU END UP LOSING, THAT'S ALL.
GOOD-BYE!!
CLICK
WHAT...
GRIP!
Y...

I'M GONNA WIN THAT RACE!
YOU'LL SEE!
KEEP IT DOWN IN THERE, YAMATO-KUN!!
THUMPA
THUMPA
I'M GONNA TAKE FIRST PLACE!
YEAH! I'M GONNA DO IT!

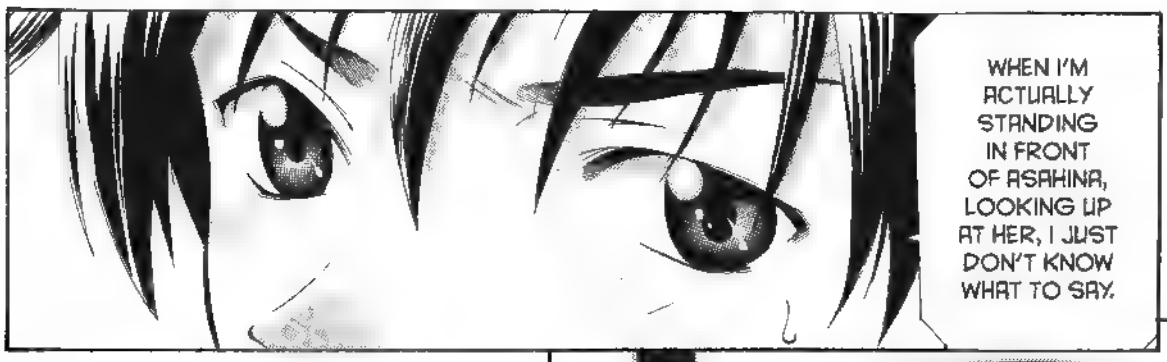
ASAHIYU BATHS
AHHH, I FEEL SO MUCH BETTER.
I CAN'T BELIEVE ASAHINA CALLED ME RIGHT AFTER WE TALKED. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY EMBARRASSED.
I WAS GOING CRAZY THINKING ABOUT IT. I SHOULD HAVE JUST TOLD HER RIGHT FROM THE START.
...I JUST WONDER IF WE'LL BE ABLE TO GO BACK TO THE WAY THINGS WERE...
カチッ
CLICK
トン
PLUP
トン
PLUP

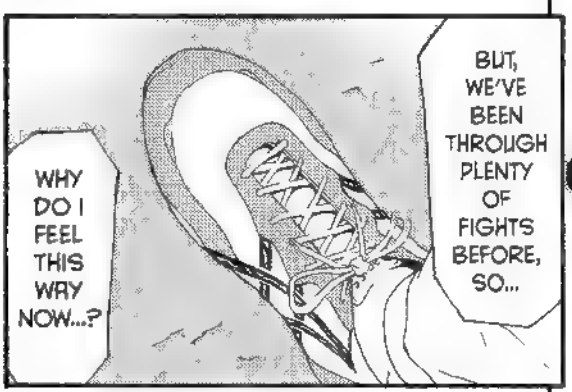
SUZUKA

#58 LAUNDRY

ASAHINA !!
WAHHH !
GOOD...
MORN-ING !
HEY....!
GOOD MORN-ING.
O-OKAY.
HURRY UP, EVERY-ONE'S WAITING FOR US.
カン CLOPPA
カン CLOPPA
WHAT WAS THAT WEIRD SOUND ?
OH, SHIT !! MY VOICE CRACKED.
.....

I DON'T KNOW.
IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE FIGHTING ANYMORE BUT...


WHEN I'M ACTUALLY STANDING IN FRONT OF ASAHINA, LOOKING UP AT HER, I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.


BUT, WE'VE BEEN THROUGH PLENTY OF FIGHTS BEFORE, SO...
WHY DO I FEEL THIS WAY NOW...?

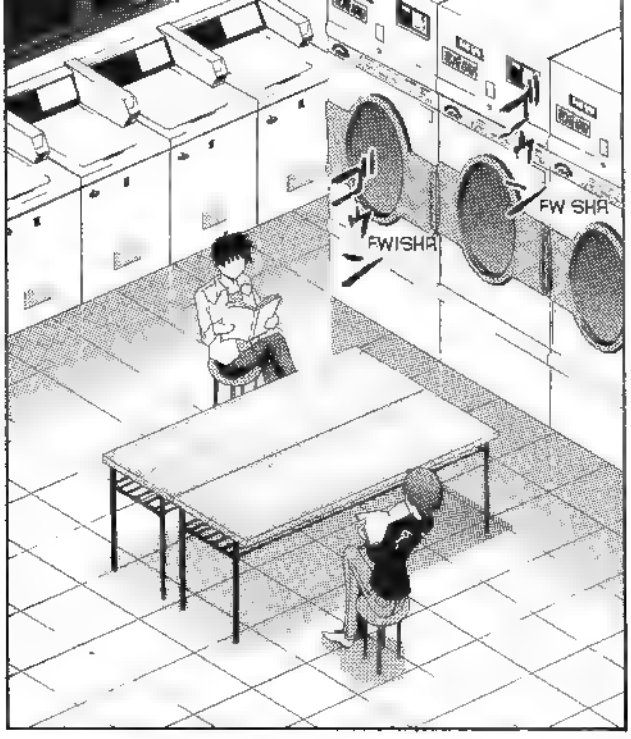
AKIT-SUKI!

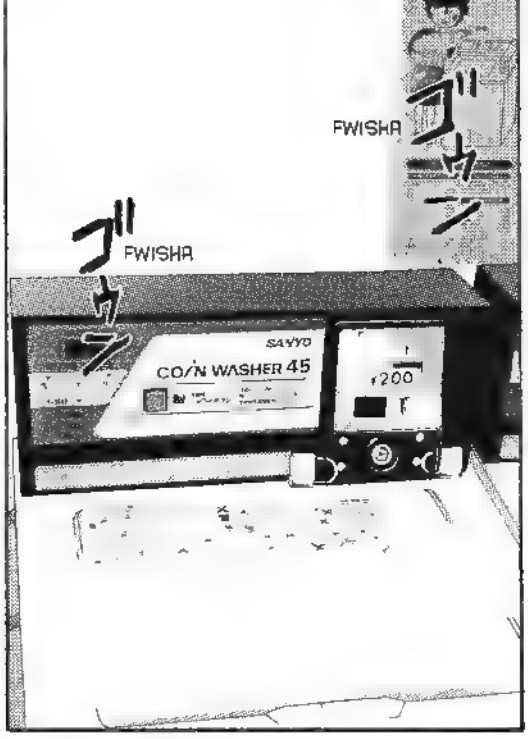
YOU DID? THAT'S GREAT !!
YEAH... GUESS.
クイ
SO? DID YOU MAKE PEACE WITH SUZUKA?
WELL, ACTUALLY IT'S KIND OF...
HUH? DID SOMETHING ELSE HAPPEN?
NO, I'VE GOT SOMETHING ELSE TO DO TODAY
OH, HEY, ARE YOU GONNA PRACTICE TODAY?
WHAT.....?
UHH, NEVER MIND. IT'S NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.
.....OKAY
IS HE REALLY OKAY.....?

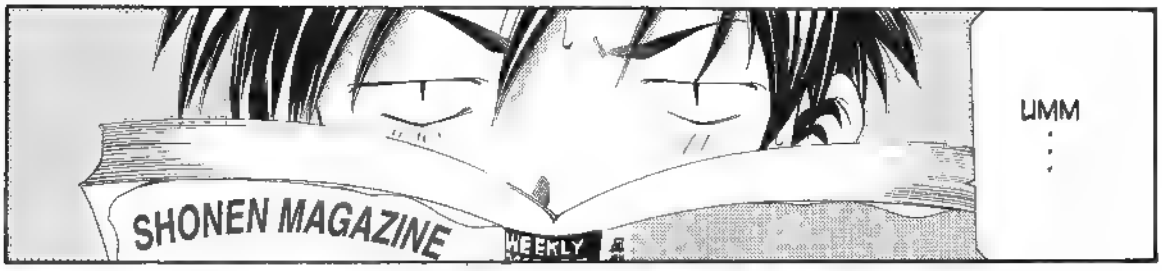
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? PILING UP ALL YOUR DIRTY LAUNDRY LIKE THIS.
IT'S GONNA GET ALL MOLDY!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? I'M TOO BUSY WITH PRACTICE TO DO LAUNDRY.
NO, IT IS NOT OKAY!
OKAY, I'M OFF TO THE LAUNDRO-MAT.
GATTA
YEAH, BUT PRETTY SOON YOU'RE NOT GONNA HAVE ANYTHING LEFT TO WEAR.
CLOP
CLOP
MIHO-CHAN'S STARTING TO SOUND JUST LIKE AYANO-SAN...
. . . LECTURING ME ALL THE TIME!
. . . HMMPH!
MEOWW

カラン
CLOPPA
GEEZ, IF OUR STUPID APARTMENT COMPLEX HAD A WASHER AND DRYER, I WOULDN'T HAVE TO LET IT PILE UP LIKE THAT!
カラン
CLOPPA
カラ
SLIDE
PURITY
DRYER
2
PURITY
DRYER
PURITY
PURITY
DETERG

A-ASAHINA……
YOU'RE DOING LAUNDRY, TOO?
……YEAH.
WITH ALL THAT TRACK PRACTICE THERE'S JUST NO TIME FOR LAUNDRY, HUH?
PLUP
PLUP
PLUP
I WOULD NEVER LET MY DIRTY CLOTHES PILE UP LIKE THAT.
HUH?
SLAM
OH YEAH……


FWISHA
FW SHA
FWISHA


FWISHA
FWISHA
SANYO
CO/N WASHER 45
¥200

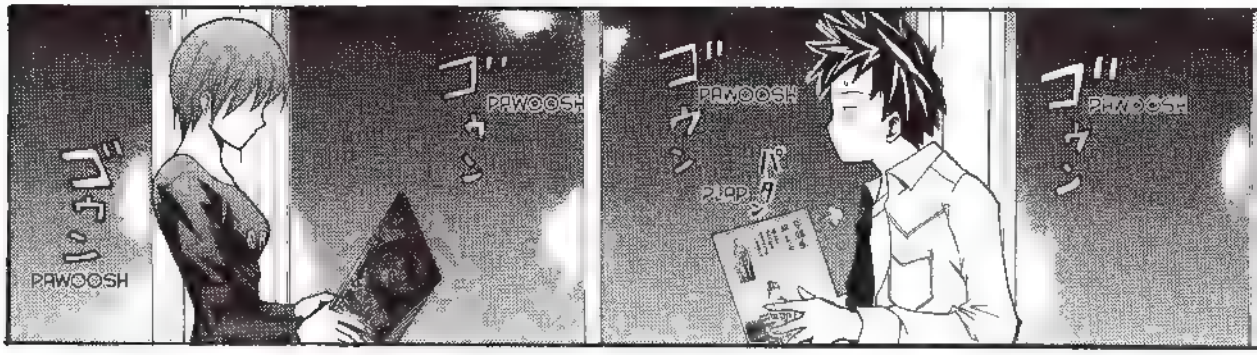

SHONEN MAGAZINE
WEEKLY
UMM
...

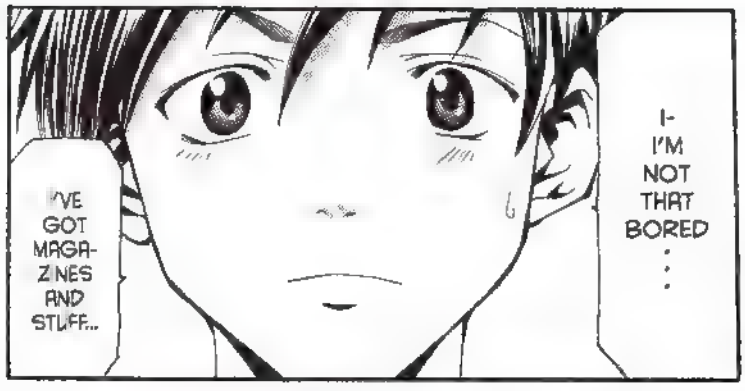
NO THANKS.
AH...YOU KNOW WHAT?! I HAVE TWO MEAT AND POTATO CRO-QUETTES. YOU WANT ONE?!

OH...
OKAY THEN...

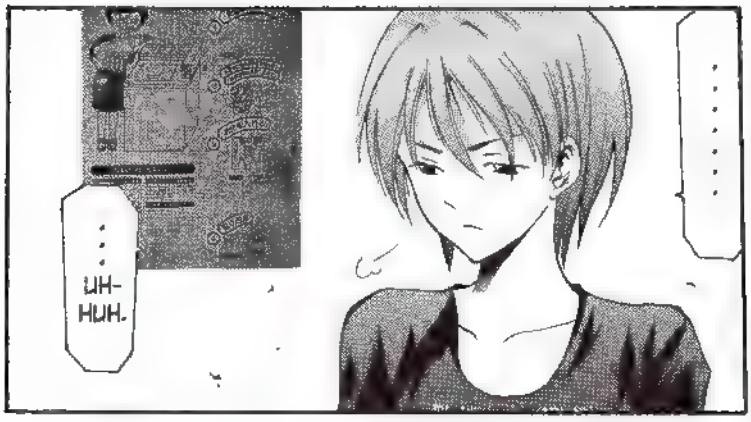
.....

HEY, WHO DO YOU THINK WILL WIN IN THE BIG FIGHT BETWEEN MASHIBA AND SAWAMURA IN THE "HAJIME NO IPPO" MANGA?
I'M BETTING ON...
SHONEN MAGAZINE


PAWOOSH
PAWOOSH
PAWOOSH
PAWOOSH


I- I'M NOT THAT BORED...
I'VE GOT MAGA-ZINES AND STUFF...

IF YOU'RE BORED WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO TO THE CONVE-NIENCE STORE OR SOME-THING?
WHAT...


.....
...UH-HUH.

W-
WHAT IS
HER
PROBLEM
?
IT'S LIKE
HER
MOOD
GETS
WORSE
EVERY
TIME I SEE
HER...
DOES SHE
JUST HATE
BEING
AROUND
ME?
BUT...
SHE JUST
SAID SHE
DOESN'T
HATE ME
ANYMORE...
HUH
?
ISN'T
YOUR
LAUNDRY
DONE
YET?
H-HEY.
DON'T
LEAVE IT
IN THE
MACHINE
TOO
LONG, IT'LL
GET ALL
WRINKLED
SHUT
UP
!!
SHOCK

UH... UM...
オロ WOBBLE
オロ WOBBLE
YOU KNOW DAMN WELL I CAN'T TAKE IT OUT.
WHAT?
HOW THE HELL DO YOU EXPECT ME TO TAKE IT OUT...
...WITH YOU STANDING THERE!! IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING!
.....
WHAT...?
WHY?
DON'T YOU GET IT?! I'VE GOT UNDERWEAR AND STUFF IN THERE! OKAY!?

OH, OKAY... I GET IT!
SO SHE WAS JUST ANNOYED BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T TAKE OUT HER UNDERWEAR!!
S-SORRY. I GUESS I WASN'T THINKING / I'M GONNA GO TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE.
CLANK
UM... WAIT A SECOND /
W-WHAT ?
MAYBE I WILL HAVE ONE...
.....

HUH? ONE WHAT?
ONE OF YOUR CROQUETTES. I'M KINDA HUNGRY SO, I'LL HAVE ONE.
SO YOU DO WANT ONE?
IS THAT A PROB-LEM?

NO. IT'S NOT A PROBLEM... WELL, ENJOY YOUR CROQUETTE.
I SAID WAIT!
洗剤

NOW WHAT?
I CAN'T EAT A CROQUETTE IN HERE ALL BY MYSELF. IT'S TOO EMBAR-RASSING.
DO YOU WANT TO EAT WITH ME?!
WHAT?
COIN WASHER 4

GOD!
I'M SAYING EAT WITH ME, AND THEN GET THE HELL OUT!!
PURITY
洗剤
I DON'T GET YOU AT ALL.
FIRST YOU TELL ME TO LEAVE, AND NOW YOU WANT ME TO EAT WITH YOU...
YOU ALWAYS DO THIS!!
HMMPH。フイッ
FORGET IT. JUST KEEP IT!
GEEZ, THAT'S HOW YOU ACT WHEN SOMEONE OFFERS TO SHARE SOMETHING WITH YOU?
CAN YOU AT LEAST PRETEND TO BE GRATEFUL・・・
PURITY
乾燥機能
PURITY
・・・・・・・・
GEEZ, SHE'S A REAL PIECE OF WORK...
YOU GOT A PROB-LEM ?!
I MEAN, YOU WERE THE ONE WHO・・・

AT FIRST, I THOUGHT SHE WAS MS. PERFECT, BUT SHE'S REALLY JUST A SPOILED LITTLE BRAT.
SHE'S TOTALLY INDECISIVE AND SHE'S SO FREAKING MOODY. I TRY TO DO SOMETHING NICE AND SHE GETS ALL PISSED...
ORDINARYE
07
SHE IS SUCH . . .
...A PAIN IN THE ASS, AND YET I'M STILL . . .

HUH...?
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!
GEEZ!
WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?!
N-NOTHING...
SHOCK
I'M DONE WITH MY CROQUETTE, SO I GUESS I'M OUTTA HERE!
UM.. DON'T COME BACK TOO SOON, OKAY
YEAH, YEAH.

HERE'S YOUR TEA, MIHO.
THANKS.
コト
PLINK
I WONDER HOW YAMATO-KUN IS DOING.
HE SAID THIS WAS GONNA BE THE SECOND COMPETITION HE'S BEEN IN.
DON'T KNOW. I JUST HOPE HE DOESN'T MAKE AN ASS OUT OF HIMSELF LIKE HE USUALLY DOES.
RIGHT, GORO-CHAN?
MEOW
SUZUKA
I'M SURE SUZUKA-CHAN WILL DO GREAT THOUGH.
THAT'S TRUE.
I BET SHE'LL SET A NEW RECORD AGAIN THIS TIME.
I MEAN, AFTER ALL, SHE DID TAKE THRID PLACE IN THE INTER-HIGH COMPETI-TION!!

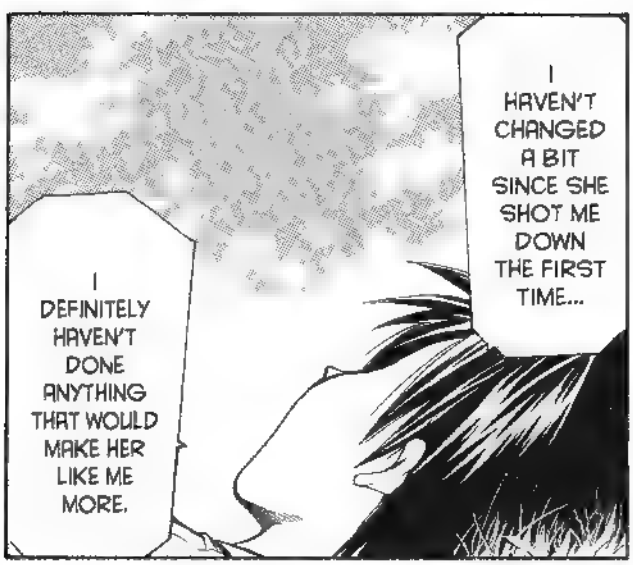
#59 RESOLUTION

SUZUKA

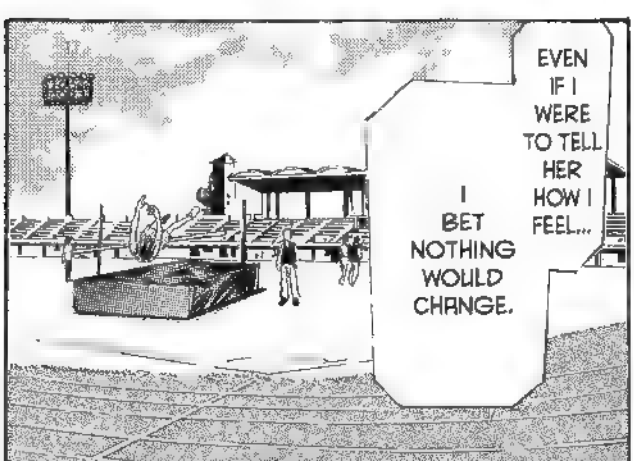
ROUND
THREE
OF THE
PRELIMINARIES
FOR THE
2005
TOKYO HIGH
SCHOOL
DISTRICT
COMPETITION

MAYBE I SHOULD . . . .
. . . . TELL HER HOW I FEEL.

. . . . . .


I HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT SINCE SHE SHOT ME DOWN THE FIRST TIME...
I DEFINITELY HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING THAT WOULD MAKE HER LIKE ME MORE.

FWUMP
BUT SHE'S ALREADY TURNED ME DOWN ONCE...
I DON'T WANNA GET SHOT DOWN AGAIN.
135


EVEN IF I WERE TO TELL HER HOW I FEEL...
I BET NOTHING WOULD CHANGE.

ASAHINA SAID IT WAS BECAUSE WE'D ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A MONTH.
BUT I BET THE REAL REASON WAS . . .
BUT, I WONDER . . .
WHY SHE SHOT ME DOWN IN THE FIRST PLACE . . .
SUZUKA REALLY LOOKED UP TO HIM.
KAZUKI WAS A GRADE AHEAD OF SUZUKA. HE WAS THE STAR OF THE TRACK TEAM.
HE WAS FAMOUS FOR HIS TWO-FOOTED LAUNCH.
HE WAS KIND OF A LOCAL CELEBRITY.
. . . . . .
SWUP
I GUESS . . .
ASAHINA COULD NEVER GO FOR A GUY LIKE ME...

STILL IN . . .

WHAT ?!
CLOMP
ARE YOU STALKING SUZUKA-CHAN AGAIN?

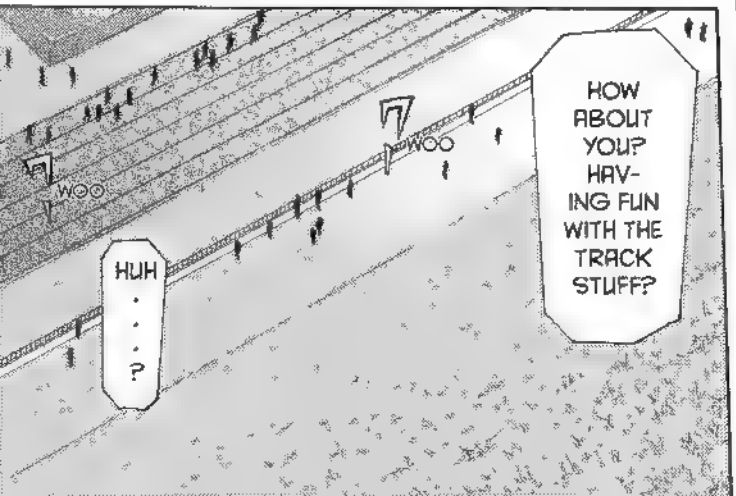
I BET SHE'S STILL . . .
125

YOU'D BETTER GET READY, MAN. YOU'RE GONNA BE UP SOON.
WHEW, WE'RE UP REALLY HIGH.
I'VE GOT TIME . . .
WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING HERE?

JUST CHECKING OUT THE BABES.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
DAMN RIGHT. AND WON'T STOP UNTIL I'VE CAPTURED THE HEART OF EVERY HOTTIE IN THE WORLD.

AT LEAST SOMEONE'S HAVING A GOOD TIME...
THAT CHICK'S A 7B.
AND I'D GIVE THAT ONE A 6O.


HOW ABOUT YOU? HAVING FUN WITH THE TRACK STUFF?
HUH . . . ?
WOO
WOO

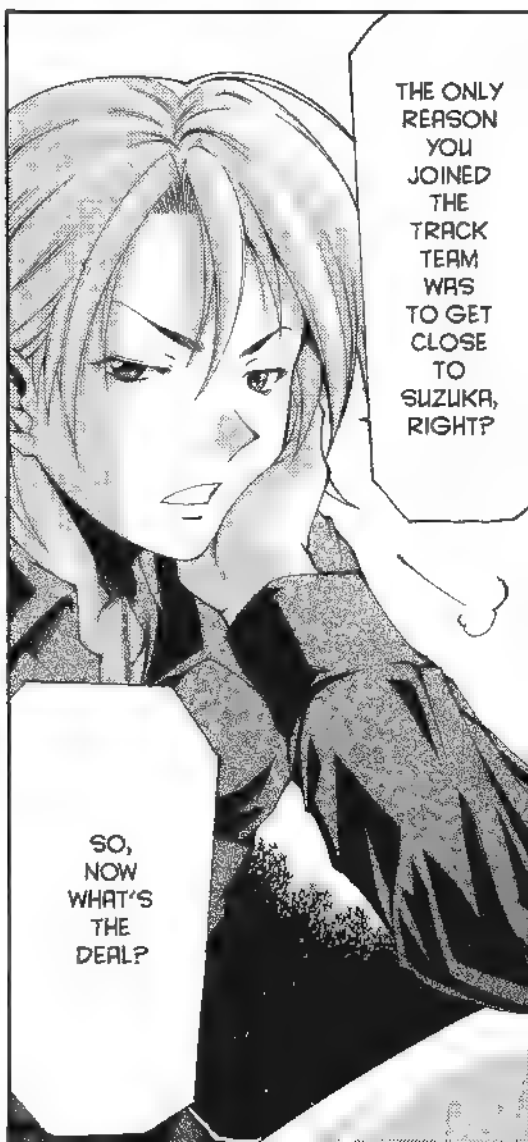
YOU DON'T REALLY SEEM THAT HAPPY.
YOU'RE SO FAST THAT YOU GOT CHOSEN TO RUN THE RELAY, AND...
. . .
YOU'RE GETTING ALL THIS ATTENTION, BUT...

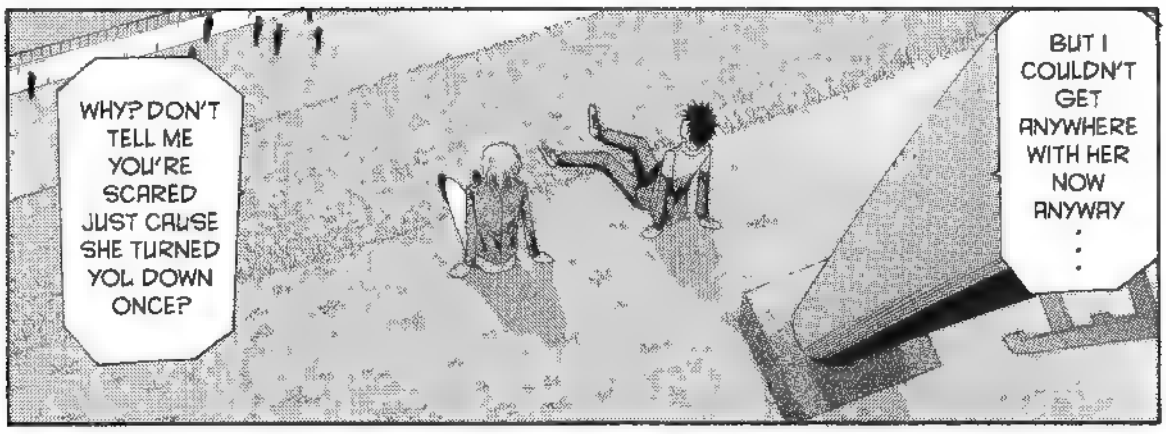
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN FOOL ME WITH YOUR LIES?
YEAH IT IS.
. . .
THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I- I DON'T EVEN CARE ABOUT ASAHINA ANYMORE.

. . . . . .

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
I MEAN, I STILL LIKE HER, BUT . . .


THE ONLY REASON YOU JOINED THE TRACK TEAM WAS TO GET CLOSE TO SUZUKA, RIGHT?
SO, NOW WHAT'S THE DEAL?


WHY? DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE SCARED JUST CAUSE SHE TURNED YOU DOWN ONCE?
BUT I COULDN'T GET ANYWHERE WITH HER NOW ANYWAY . . .

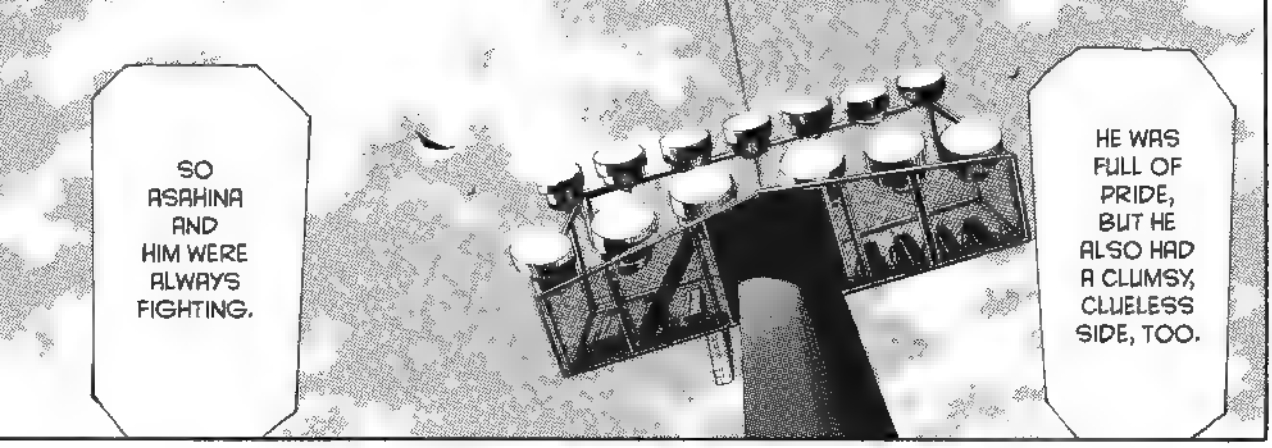
THAT'S NOT WHY...
. . . . . .

SHUT UP.
WHAT'S UP? YOU HERE TO CHECK OUT THE BABES, TOO?

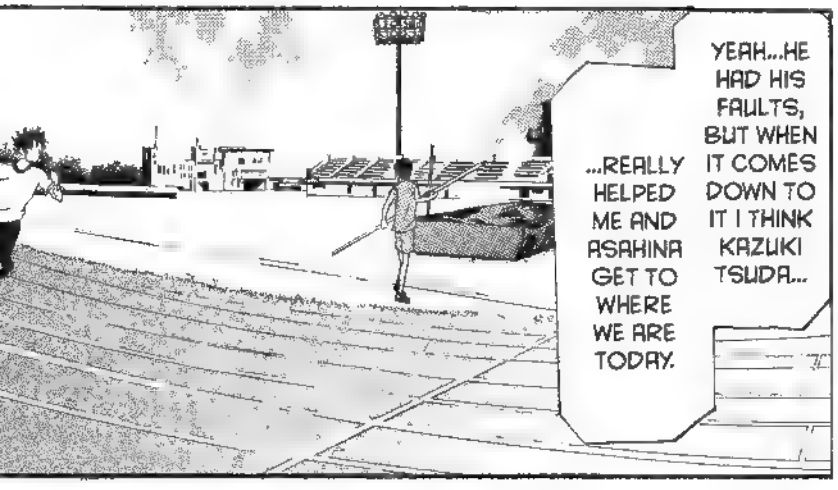
OH, THERE YOU ARE, AKITSUKI.
MIYA-MOTO SENPAI

I'M THE CAPTAIN NOW... STARTING WITH THIS COMPETITION.
I'M STILL A LITTLE NERVOUS. SO, I JUST WANTED TO GET SOME FRESH AIR.

HYUU
YEAH, WELL, GUESS YOU DON'T REALLY LOOK LIKE THE CAPTAIN TYPE, MIYAMOTO SENPAI.
HA HA, HARSH.
KAZUKI TSUDA WHO SHOULD BE CAPTAIN, NOT ME.
OF COURSE IT'S REALLY . . .
TSUDA...
. . . WHAT ?
I GUESS YOU GUYS WOULDN'T KNOW HIM, HUH...?
HE WENT TO THE SAME JUNIOR HIGH AS ASAHINA AND I.
BUT HE DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT TWO YEARS AGO.


SO ASAHINA AND HIM WERE ALWAYS FIGHTING.
HE WAS FULL OF PRIDE, BUT HE ALSO HAD A CLUMSY, CLUELESS SIDE, TOO.

AT HIS FINAL RACE, HE TOOK FIRST PLACE IN THE 100 METER DASH. FIRST IN THE WHOLE NATION.
BUT NOBODY TOOK TRACK AS SERIOUSLY AS HE DID.


...REALLY HELPED ME AND ASAHINA GET TO WHERE WE ARE TODAY.
YEAH...HE HAD HIS FAULTS, BUT WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT I THINK KAZUKI TSUDA...

...
WOW.
HE MUSTA REALLY BEEN AMAZING.

WHAT?
WH-WHAT ARE YOU—?
...SO, DO YOU THINK SUZUKA-CHAN HAD A CRUSH ON THE GUY?

YEAH...
SHE PROBABLY DID LIKE HIM.

.....

I KNOW SHE STILL VISITS HIS GRAVE FROM TIME TO TIME...
12
I THINK ASAHINA TOOK KAZUKI'S DEATH HARDER THAN ANYBODY.

HEY, DON'T TELL ASAHINA THAT I TOLD YOU GUYS ABOUT THIS, ALL RIGHT?
SHE'D BE TOTALLY PISSED.
OKAY...

OKAY.
WELL, I'D BETTER GET GOING.
DON'T BE LATE OKAY, AKITSUKI?
GET IT.
SHUT UP.
YOU FEEL LIKE, YOU CAN NEVER LIVE UP TO THIS TSUDA GUY...
...SO YOU FIGURE SHE'LL JUST KEEP SHOOTING YOU DOWN IF YOU TRY.
WELL, I DON'T BLAME YOU.
HE SOUNDS LIKE THE KIND OF GUY YOU COULD COUNT ON, AND HE TOOK THE TRACK TEAM REALLY SERIOUSLY...

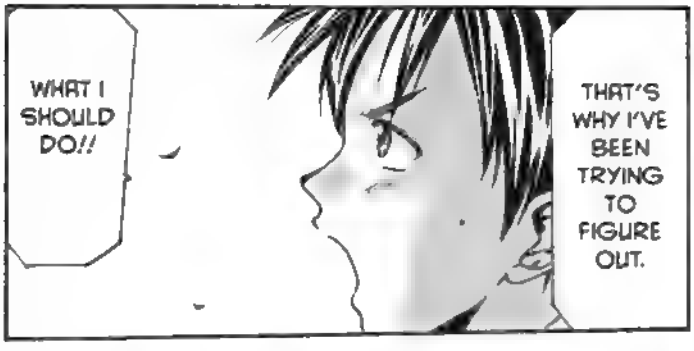
ON TOP OF THAT, HE TOOK FIRST PLACE IN THE NATION.
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, A GUY LIKE YOU JUST CAN'T—
.....
OH... SHUT UP.
SHUT UP, SHUT UP!!
136
SHUUUT UP!!

AH...
HE'S PROBABLY JUST CRAZY.
W-WHAT'S GOING ON? THAT GUY'S SCREAMING.
112
125
98
WHO IS THAT?
WHAT SCHOOL'S UNIFORM IS HE WEARING?
DUNNO.
FAWUMP
ごごごっ
112
YAMATO-KUN.
WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING? WHY DOES HE...
...ALWAYS HAVE TO EMBARRASS ME LIKE THIS!

W-WHAT THE HELL'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
YOU SCARED THE SHIT OUTTA ME!

ASAHINA STILL LIKES TSUDA AND...
IN HER EYES, I'LL NEVER BE HALF THE GUY HE WAS.
I'M AWARE OF THAT.

LISTEN, I KNOW ALL THAT . . . . . ALREADY, OKAY.


THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT.
WHAT I SHOULD DO!!

AND?
DID YOU COME UP WITH ANY IDEAS?

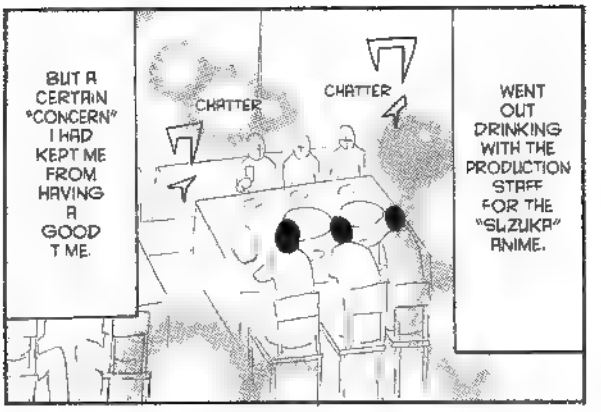
HUH ?
I'M DONE WITH SITTING AROUND AND WORRYING ABOUT T..
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND... I'M GONNA BE THE NUMBER ONE ATHLETE IN ALL OF JAPAN!!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
SHUT UP!
136
I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT...
I JUST FEEL LIKE... THAT'S WHAT I HAVE TO DO!!
ALL RUNNERS TO THE TRACK IMMEDIATELY.
ATTENTION PLEASE. THE MEN'S 100 METER PRELIMINARY RACE WILL BEGIN MOMENTARILY.

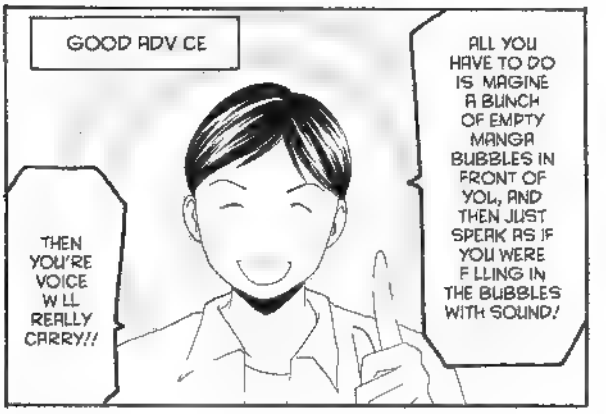
CONTINUED IN BOOK 8

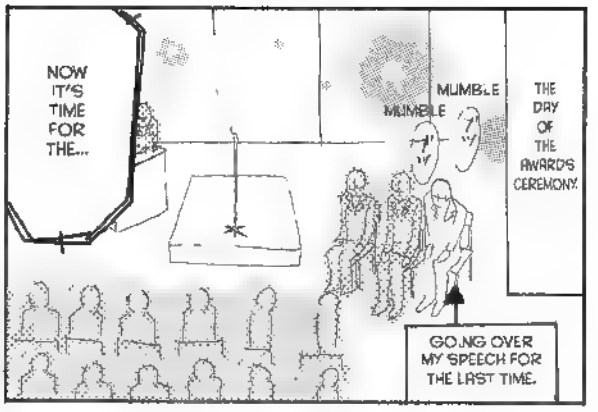
SPECIAL BONUS MANGA

PLEASE DON'T DRAG ME OUT IN PUBLIC (DAY 1)


BUT A CERTAIN "CONCERN" I HAD KEPT ME FROM HAVING A GOOD T ME.
CHATTER
CHATTER
WENT OUT DRINKING WITH THE PRODUCTION STAFF FOR THE "SUZUKA" ANIME.

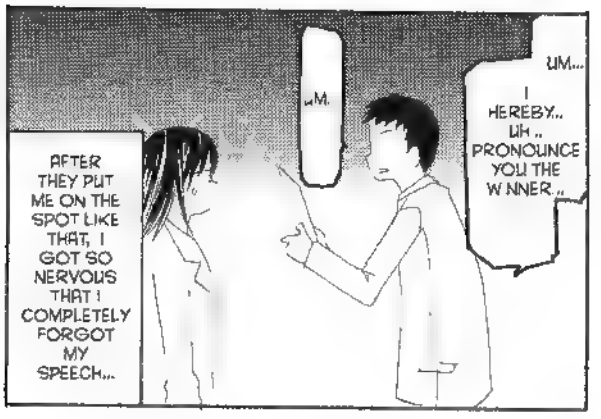
UM...WELL... THE THING IS THAT I HAVE TO G VE A SPEECH AT THE "NEW ART ST OF THE YEAR" AWARDS TOMORROW... AND I'M REAL..Y BAD AT SPEAKING N PUBL C
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD. ARE YOU NERVOUS ABOUT SOMETHING?
VOICE-OVER D RECTOR, YUJ MITSUYA.

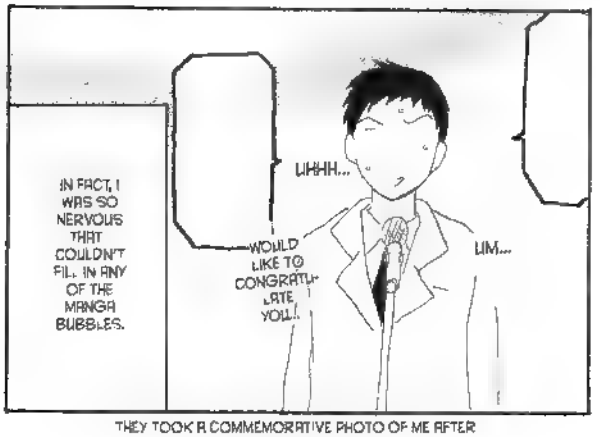

GOOD ADV CE
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS MAGINE A BUNCH OF EMPTY MANGA BUBBLES IN FRONT OF YOU, AND THEN JUST SPEAK AS IF YOU WERE F LLING IN THE BUBBLES WITH SOUND!
THEN YOU'RE VOICE W LL REALLY CARRY!!



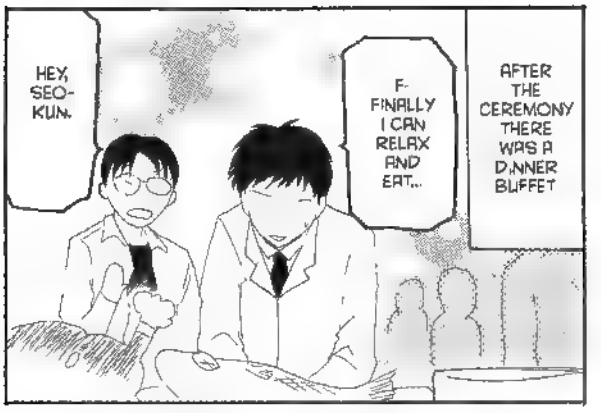
DAY 2

WHAT?! WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT? NOBODY TOLD ME ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!
...KOUJI SEO AWARD MR SEO HIMSELF WILL PRESENT THE WINNER WITH A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE.


AFTER THEY PUT ME ON THE SPOT LIKE THAT, I GOT SO NERVOUS THAT I COMPLETELY FORGOT MY SPEECH...
UM.
UM... I HEREBY.. UH .. PRONOUNCE YOU THE WINNER..



THEY TOOK A COMMEMORATIVE PHOTO OF ME AFTER THAT AND LOOKED TOTALLY TENSE.


HEY, SEO-KUN.
F-FINALLY I CAN RELAX AND EAT...
AFTER THE CEREMONY THERE WAS A DINNER BUFFET

WHAT? NOBODY TOLD ME THAT!!
THEY GOT ME AGAIN.
YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER SPEECH COMING UP AT THE END OF THE PARTY.

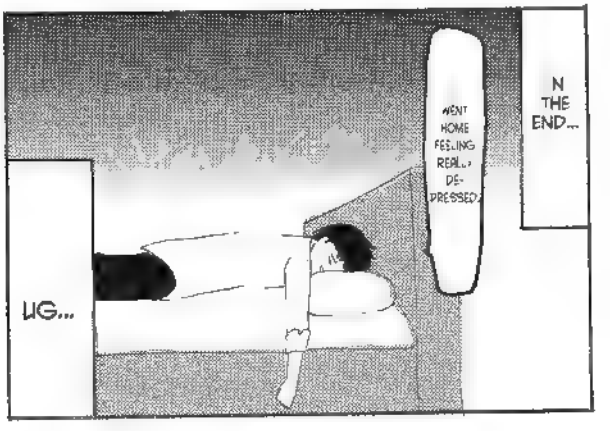
OH SHIT, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO SAY.
ALL THIS PRESSURE IS MAKING MY STOMACH HURT.

WHAT?
CHOMP
もぐもぐ
OH, I TOLD THEM YOU WOULDN'T BE DOING ANOTHER SPEECH, SO YOU CAN RELAX. I'M SUCH A NICE GUY...
AND JUST AS THE PARTY WAS ABOUT TO END.
WHY D DN'T YOU TELL ME SOONER !!

THE AFTER PARTY

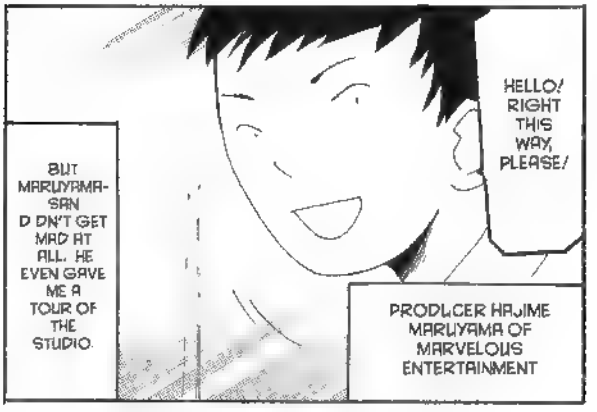
CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH, TOO?
CHATTER
CHATTER
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
WE WENT TO IKEBU-KURO FOR THE AFTER PARTY
MASHIMA-SENSEI JOINED US LATER ON. HE SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING HIMSELF AS HE MINGLED WITH THE NEW ART STS.
WOW

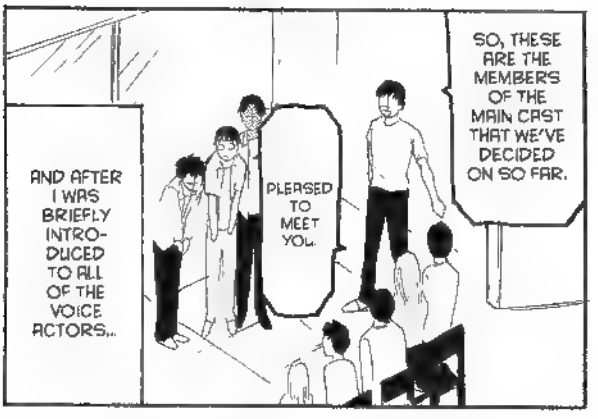
I GOT DRUNK AND STARTED POURING MY HEART OUT TO *PASTEL* CREATOR KOBAYASHI-SENSEI.
Y-YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
CLINK
WE MANGA WRITERS ARE A DISPOS-ABLE RE SOURCE.
AND AS IF THAT WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH...



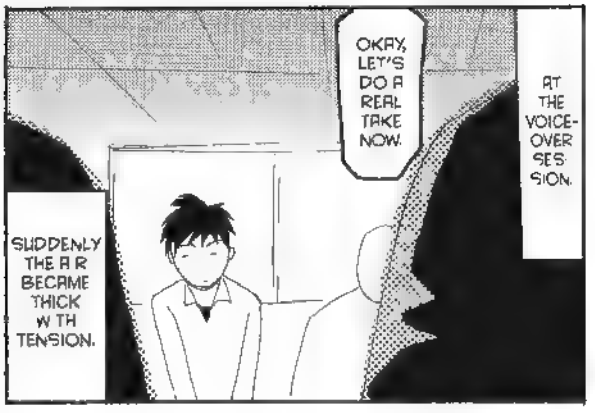
THE THIRD DAY

HARAJUKU
はらじゅく
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER, SEO SAN!
SORRY I'M LATE. COULDN'T SLEEP AT ALL LAST NIGHT 'CAUSE I WAS ALL DEPRESSED.
I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO VIS T THE RECORDING STUDIO THE NEXT DAY.
WAS TWENTY MINUTES LATE.
OH, BROTHER.


HELLO! RIGHT THIS WAY, PLEASE!
BUT MARUYAMA-SAN D DN'T GET MAD AT ALL. HE EVEN GAVE ME A TOUR OF THE STUDIO.
PRODUCER HAJIME MARUYAMA OF MARVELOUS ENTERTAINMENT

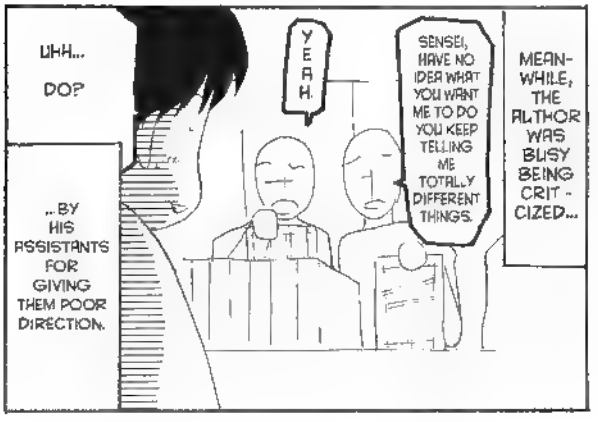

SO, THESE ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE MAIN CAST THAT WE'VE DECIDED ON SO FAR.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
AND AFTER I WAS BRIEFLY INTRO-DUCED TO ALL OF THE VOICE ACTORS...

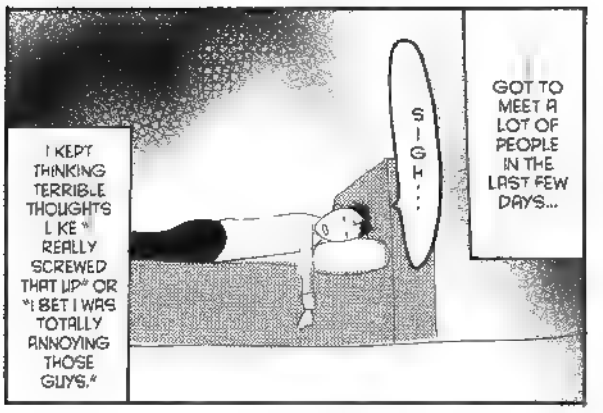
WHAT?! NOBODY TOLD ME ANYTH NG ABOUT THAT!!
SHOCK
SO, WHY DON'T WE TAKE THIS TIME TO ALLOW SEO-SENSEI TO SAY A FEW WORDS.
THEY GOT ME AGAIN.


AT THE VOICE-OVER SESSION.
OKAY, LET'S DO A REAL TAKE NOW.
SUDDENLY THE AIR BECAME THICK WITH TENSION.

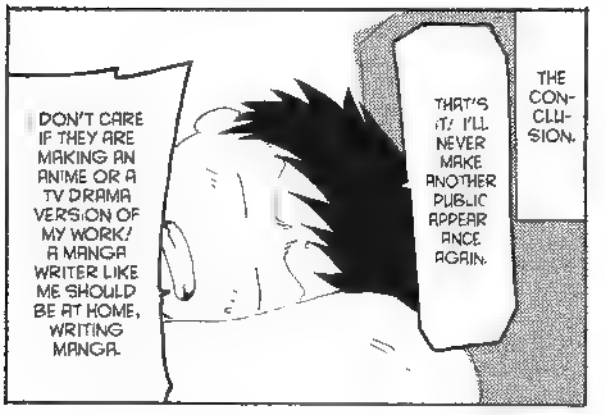
THE WRITER WAS AS GIDDY AS...
WOW!
COOL.
...A SCHOOL BOY ON HIS FIRST FIELD TRIP

MEANWHILE, VOICE RECORDING PRODUCER MITSUYA-SAN WAS GIVING OUT PLENTY OF DIRECTION TO THE VOICE ACTORS.
NO, NOT LIKE THAT. TRY TO PUT THE EMPHASIS ON THE WORD "WHAT."
OKAY, LET'S TRY IT AGAIN!
WOW!
HE IS A TRUE PROFESSIONAL.


MEANWHILE, THE AUTHOR WAS BUSY BEING CRITICIZED...
SENSEI, HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO YOU KEEP TELLING ME TOTALLY DIFFERENT THINGS.
YEAH.
UHH... DO?
...BY HIS ASSISTANTS FOR GIVING THEM POOR DIRECTION.


I KEPT THINKING TERRIBLE THOUGHTS LIKE "I REALLY SCREWED THAT UP" OR "I BET I WAS TOTALLY ANNOYING THOSE GUYS."
SIGH...
GOT TO MEET A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE LAST FEW DAYS...

THE FOURTH DAY


I DON'T CARE IF THEY ARE MAKING AN ANIME OR A TV DRAMA VERSION OF MY WORK! A MANGA WRITER LIKE ME SHOULD BE AT HOME, WRITING MANGA.
THAT'S IT! I'LL NEVER MAKE ANOTHER PUBLIC APPEARANCE AGAIN.
THE CONCLUSION.

TO BE CONTINUED . . . ?

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Okonomiyaki and *Monja*, Page 102

Okonomiyaki is often referred to as a Japanese pancake. It's made of batter and a mixture of meat, vegetables, egg, and sometimes noodles. At most *okonomiyaki* restaurants your table will have a built-in grill, and you can cook your own *okonomiyaki* right at the table. *Monja* has similar ingredients, but it isn't pancake shaped and is generally a bit runnier.

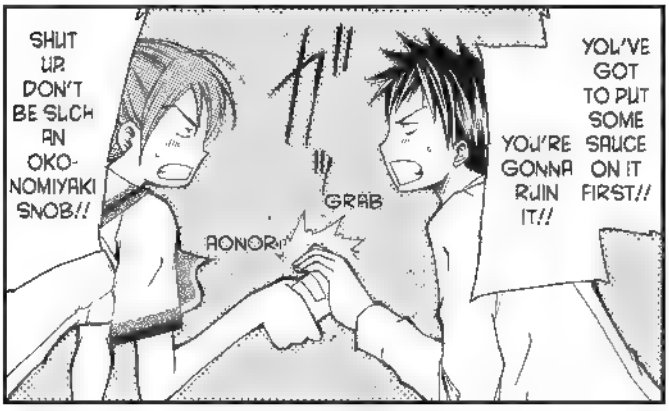
Kansai vs Hiroshima, Page 104

There are two *okonomiyaki* meccas in Japan—Kansai (Osaka) and Hiroshima. Hiroshima style often comes with noodles mixed in and sometimes has a fried egg on top.

OKONOMIYAKI&MONJA
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M A PRO!
YOU'RE FROM HIRO-SHIMA, SO WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT IT?!
THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE KANSAI-STYLE, YOU KNOW?!

Aonori and other toppings, Page 104

After it's done, *okonomiyaki* is generally slathered with sauce and mayonnaise and then sprinkled with fish flakes and *aonori* seaweed.



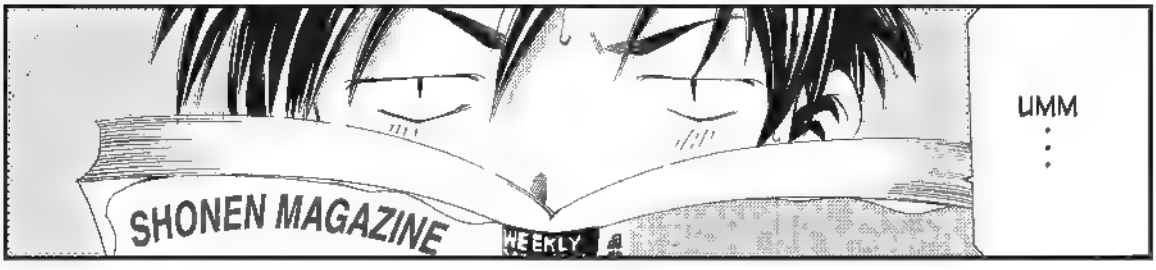
Mold, Page 152

Japan is a very humid place, particularly during the hot and rainy summer. Clothes really do get moldy if you leave them piled up for too long.

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? PILING UP ALL YOUR DIRTY LAUNDRY LIKE THIS.
IT'S GONNA GET ALL MOLDY!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? I'M TOO BUSY WITH PRACTICE TO DO LAUNDRY.

Shonen Magazine, Page 155

Yamato is reading *Shonen Magazine,* a very popular *shonen* weekly manga magazine published by Kodansha.



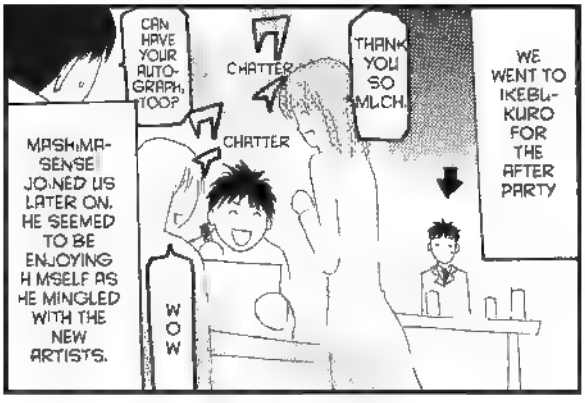
Hajime no Ippo, Page 156

Hajime no Ippo is a wildly popular boxing manga that runs in *Shonen Magazine*

HEY, WHO DO YOU THINK WILL WIN IN THE BIG FIGHT BETWEEN MASHIBA AND SAWAMURA IN THE "HAJIME NO IPPO" MANGA?
SHONEN MAGAZINE
I'M BETTING ON . . .
SHONEN MAGAZINE

Mashima-sensei, Page 186

This is probably a reference to Hiro Mashima, who is known for the *Shonen Magazine* titles *Rave Master* and *Fairy Tail*. *Fairy Tail* is coming to you in English in April 2008, courtesy of Del Rey!


CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH, TOO?
CHATTER
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
WE WENT TO IKEBU-KURO FOR THE AFTER PARTY
MASHIMA-SENSE JOINED US LATER ON. HE SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING H MSELF AS HE MINGLED WITH THE NEW ARTISTS.
CHATTER
WOW

Pastel, Page 186

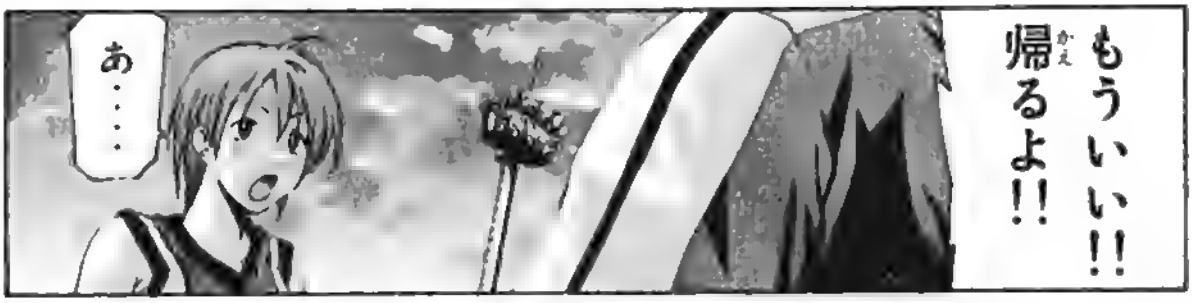
Pastel is another popular Kodansha *shonen* title about a typical high school kid who ends up living with the girl he's got a crush on. Look for Del Rey's English version of *Pastel* in your local bookshop.

I GOT DRUNK AND STARTED POURING MY HEART OUT TO "PASTEL" CREATOR KOBAYASHI-SENSEI.
Y-YEAH, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
CLINK
WE MANGA WRITERS ARE A DISPOS-ABLE RE-SOURCE.
AND AS IF THAT WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH...

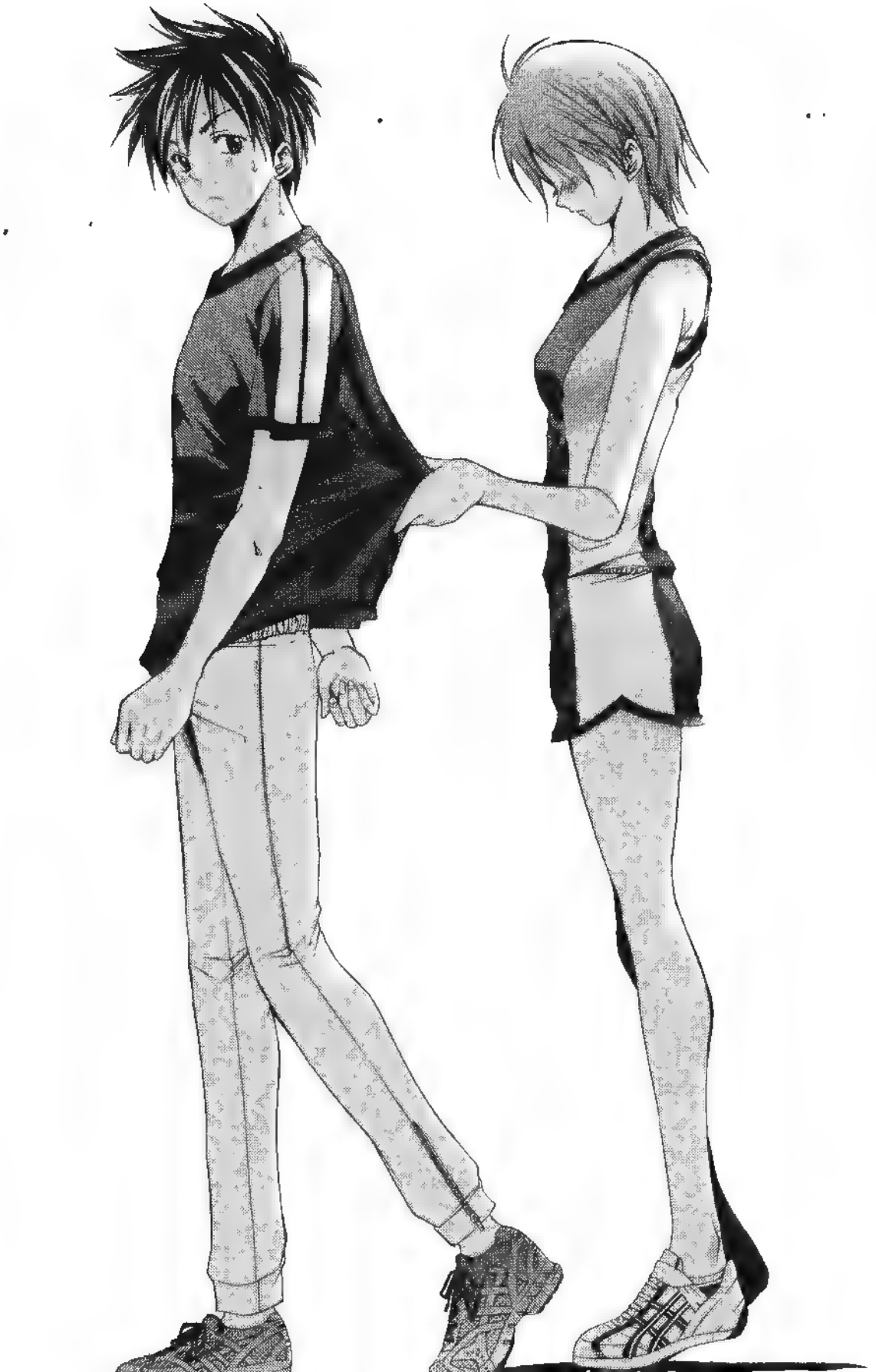
Preview of Volume 8

We're pleased to present you with a preview of volume 8. Please check our website (www.delreymanga.com) to see when this volume will be available in English. For now you'll have to make do with Japanese!

オレが何で
こんな必死なのか
知りもしないで…
ギュッ
勝手なこと
ばっか言って…


もういい!!
帰るよ!!
あ…

ま…
待ちなさいよ!!
ちょっと!!
カツン
カツン
カツン
ねェ…
あの…



は……？
……
待ってよ……

ゴメン……
私 そんなつもりで
言ったんじゃ
ないから……
え……

だから……
そんなに
怒んないでよ

え…いや……
別に……
怒っては
ないけど……

HIROYUKI TAMAKOSHI

JUST ONE OF THE GIRLS

A whole new Gacha Gacha story line begins! Akira Hatsushiba is just your typical, average high school kid . . . until a glitch in a Gacha Gacha video game changes his life forever. Now, every time Akira sneezes, his entire body undergoes a gender-bending switcheroo! That's right, Akira is always just an *achoo* away from getting in touch with his feminine side. But it's not all bad. Akira has had a crush on Yurika Sakuraba ever since he first laid eyes on her. He's always been too shy, but now that he can change into a girl, Akira finally has a chance to get close to Yurika. Being a girl certainly has its advantages!

Special extras in each volume! Read them all!

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RATING M AGES 18+

DEL REY DEL REY MANGA デルレイ
The Otaku's Choice

Gacha Gacha: The Next Revolution © 2004 Hiroyuki Tamakoshi / KODANSHA LTD. All rights reserved.

Pastel

by Toshihiko Kobayashi

I LOVE YUU

Poor 16-year-old Mugi Tadano is left heartbroken after his girlfriend moves away. A summer job at his friend Kazuki's beachside snack bar/hotel seems like the perfect way to get his mind off the breakup. Soon Kazuki sets Mugi up on a date with a girl named Yuu, who's supposed to be...well...a little less than perfect. But when Yuu arrives, she's not the monster that either of the boys had imagined. In fact, Yuu is about the cutest girl that Mugi has ever seen. But after Mugi accidentally walks in on Yuu while she's in the bath, Yuu is furious. When Mugi goes to apologize the next day, he learns that Yuu has left the island. Mugi vows to search high and low for her, but will he ever see the beautiful Yuu again?

Ages: 16+

Special extras in each volume! Read them all!

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Psycho Busters

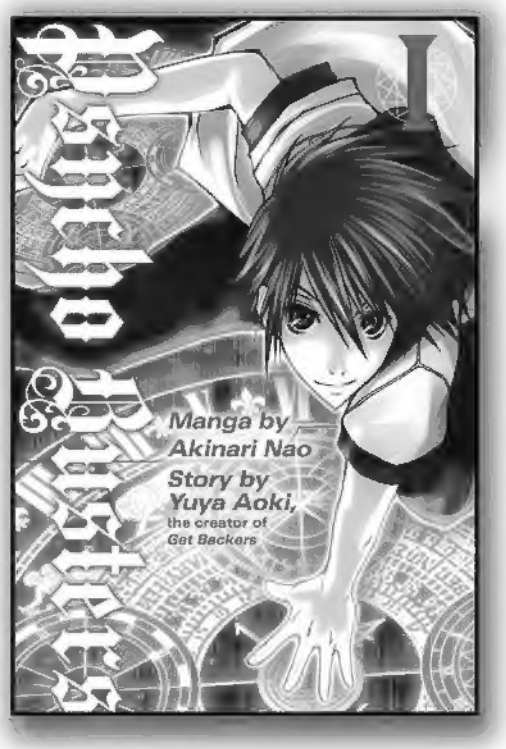
MANGA BY AKINARI NAO
STORY BY YUYA AOKI

PSYCHIC TEENS ON THE RUN!

Out of the blue, a beautiful girl asks Kakeru to run away with her. This could be any boy's dream come true, but there's something strange afoot.

It turns out that this girl is on the run from a shadowy government organization intent on using her psychic abilities for its own nefarious ends. But why does she need Kakeru's help? Could it be that he has secret powers, too?

- **Story by Yuya Aoki, creator of *Get Backers***



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RATING T AGES 13+

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The Otaku's Choice™

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You are going the wrong way!

Manga is a completely different
type of reading experience.

To start at the *beginning,* go to the *end*!

That's right! Authentic manga is read the traditional Japanese way—from right to left, exactly the *opposite* of how American books are read. It's easy to follow: Just go to the other end of the book, and read each page—and each panel—from right side to left side, starting at the top right. Now you're experiencing manga as it was meant to be.